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A
COLLECTION
OF
NEW PLAYS
BY
SEVERAL HANDS
VOL. IV.



ALTENBURGH.
Printed for GOTTL. EMAN. RICHTER.
MDCCLXXVIII.

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OF
NEW P LAYS
BY
SEVERAL HANDS

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ALLENBURGH.
Printed for G. & J. B. & Co. by R. & J. B. & Co.
MDCCCLXIII.

Dramatis Personae.

M. E. N.

Mr. HARGREAVES, THE

GEORGE HARGREAVES, Justice.

R. U. N. A. W. A. Y.

Mr. DRUMMOND, Mr. HUNTER.

Mr. CHAS. SEYMOUR, A

C O M M E D Y.

Lady DUNN, HARRIET.

BELLA, SUSAN.

EMILY.

Gentlemen, Waiters, Servants, etc.

VOL. IV.

A.

Dramatis Personae.

M E N.

Mr. H A R G R A V E, Mr. M O R L E Y,

G E O R G E H A R - J U S T I C E,

G R A V E, W J A R V I S, U R

Mr. D R U M M O N D, F i r s t H U N T E R.

Sir C H A. S E Y M O U R,

W O M E N.

Lady D I N A H, H A R R I E T,

B E L L A, S U S A N.

E M I L Y,

Gentlemen, Hunters, Servants, *etc.*

THE
RUNAWAY.

ACT I.

SCENE, *a Garden.*

GEORGE, BELLA *and* HARRIET.

George. OH, for the luxury of night-gown and slippers! No jaded hack of Parnassus can be more tired than I am—the roads so dusty, and the sun so hot—'twould be less intolerable riding post in Africa.

Bella. What a wild imagination!—But in the name of Fortune, why are you alone? What have you done with all the College youths?—This is the first vacation you ever came home unaccompanied, and I assure you we are quite disappointed.

Geo. Oh, most unconscionable Woman! Never to be satisfied with conquest——

There's poor Lumley shot through by your wicked eyes.

Bella. A notable victory indeed!—— however, his name serves to make a figure in the list of one's conquests, and so you may give him just hope enough to feed his sighs,—but not to encourage his presumption.

Geo. Paragon of generosity!——And what portion of comfort will your Ladyship bestow on Egerton and Filmer, who still hug the chains of the resitless Arabella?

Bella. Upon my word, your catalogue grows interesting—'tis worth while now to enquire for your vouchers——Proofs, George, proofs.

Geo. Why, the first writes sonnets in your praise, and the last toasts you till he can't see.

Bel. Oh, excellent!——The Dulcinea of one—and Circe of the other; ha! ha! —to transform him into a beast. I hope you have better love-tokens for the blushing Harriet——How does——

Harriet. Fye, Bella——you use me ill.

Geo. Why, Sister, you plead guilty, before the charge is exhibited——But tell me, my sweet Harriet, who is this favour'd mortal, of whom you mean to enquire?

Har.

Har. Indeed, Brother, I have no enquiries to make; but I imagine my Cousin can inform you whom she meant.

Bella. Oh, doubtless—but you look so offended, Harriet, that I dare not venture the enquiry: ask for Sir Charles Seymour yourself.

Geo. Seymour! Ho, ho! Very fine truly! [*aside.*] If Seymour be the man, my Sister, set your heart at rest—he is on the point of marriage, *if I am not mistaken*, with a fine blooming Girl, not more than eighteen—Soft, dove-like eyes—pouting lips—teeth that were, doubtless, made of oriental pearl—a neck—I want a simile now—ivory, wax, alabaster!—no; they won't do.

Har. [*with an air of pique.*] One would imagine, Brother, you were drawing the picture of your own Mistress, instead of Sir Charles's, your colours are so warm.

Geo. A fine Woman, Harriet, gives warmth to all around her—She is that universal spirit, about which Philosophers talk; the true point of attraction that governs Nature, and controuls the universe of Man.

Bella. Heyday, George! Did the charms of Lady Dinah inspire this rhapsody?

Geo. Charms! what, of that antiquated, sententious, delicate Lady, who bless'd us with her long speeches at dinner?

Bel. You must learn to be more respectful in your epithets, Sir; for that sententious, delicate Lady designs you the honour of becoming your Mother.

Geo. My Mother! Heaven forefend——you jest, surely.

Bel. You shall judge——We met her in our late visit to Bath——She renewed her acquaintance with your Father, with whom, in Mrs. Hargrave's life-time, she had been intimate——He invited her to return with us, and she has been here this month——They are frequently closeted together——She has *forty thousand pounds*, and is Sister to an Irish Peer.

Geo. She might have been Grandmother to the Peer, by the days she has numbered——But her excessive propriety and decorum overcome me——How can they agree with my Father's vociferation, October, and hounds?

Bel. Oh, I assure you, wondrously well——she kisses Jowler, takes Ringwood on her lap, and has, more than once, sipp'd out of your Father's tankard.——Delicacies, Cousin, are easily made to give way, when we have certain ends to answer.

Geo. Very true; and beware of that period, when delicacies *must* give way——tremble at the hour, Bella, when you'll rise from the labours of your toilette with

no

no end in view, but the conquest of some Quixote Galant in his grand climacteric, on whom you'll squander more encouraging glances, than all the sighs and ardors of two and twenty can extort from you now.

Bel. Memento mori! Quite a College compliment; you ought rather to have supposed that my power will increase; and that, like Ninon, I may give myself the airs of eighteen at eighty——But here's John coming to summon us to coffee——Harriet!

Geo. Come, Harriet—why that pensive air? Give me your hand.

Har. Excuse me——I'll only step and look at my birds, and follow you instantly——[*Exeunt GEORGE and BELLA playfully.*]——“Set your heart at rest, my Sister.”——Oh, Brother!—you have robb'd that heart of rest for ever. Cruel intelligence!——Something has long sat heavy in my bosom, and now the weight is irremoveable——Perfidious Seymour!——yet, of what can I accuse him? He never profess'd to love me——Oh yes, his ardent looks—his sighs—his confusion——his respectful attentions, have a thousand times profess'd the strongest passion——Surely, a man cannot, in honour, be exculpated, who by such methods defrauds a Woman of her heart; even tho'

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the word Love should never pass his lips. Yet I ought not to have trusted these seeming proofs—no; I must only blame my own credulity——O partial Nature! why have you given us hearts so replete with tenderness, and minds so weak, so yielding?

SCENE, *a Garden Parlour.*

Enter GEORGE *and* BELLA *at the Garden Door.*

BELLA *seating herself at a Tea-table.*

Bel. Hang this Lady Dinah——one's forc'd to be so dress'd, and so formal!——In the country we should be all shepherds and shepherdesses——Meadows, ditches, rooks, and court-manners, are the strangest combination!

Geo. Hift—she's in the hall, I see——I'll go and 'squire her in.——

[*Exit* GEORGE, *and returns with*

Lady DINAH.

Lady D. To you, Sir, who have been so long conversant with the fine manners of the Antients, the frivolous custom of tea-drinking must appear ridiculous.

Geo. No custom can be ridiculous, Madam, that gives us the society of the Ladies——The young men of those days deserve

deserve your Ladyship's pity, for having never tasted these elegant hours.

Lady D. [*Aside.*] He is just what his Father described.

Enter Mr. HARGRAVE, and a Servant.

Mr. H. No;——Barbary Bess is spavin'd; let her be taken care of: I'll have Longshanks, and see that he's saddled by five. [*Exit SERVANT.*]——So we shan't have you in the hunt to-morrow, George,——you must have more time to shake off the lazy rust of Cambridge, I suppose.——What sort of hours d'ye keep at College?

Geo. Oh, Sir, we are frequently up before the Sun, there.

Mr. H. Hah!——then 'tis when you ha'n't been in bed all night, I believe.——And how do you stand in other matters?——Have the musty old Dons tired you with their Greek and their Geometry, and their learned Experiments to shew what air, and fire, and water, are made of? Ha! ha! ha!

Bella. Oh, no, Sir—he never studied them closely enough to be tired—his Philosophy and mine keep pretty equal pace, I believe.

Geo. As usual, my lively Cousin——If you had said my Philosophy and your Coquetry, I should have thought you had meant

meant to compliment me—However, Sir, I am not tired of my studies, though Bella has not exactly hit the reason.

Lady D. to Mr. H. The Muses, Sir, sufficiently recompence the most painful assiduities by which we obtain their favour——Their true lovers are never fatiated with the pleasures they bestow—those, indeed, who court them, like the Toasts of the season, because it is the fashion, are neither warm'd by their beauties, nor penetrated with their charms——but these are faithless Knights; your Son, I dare say, has enlisted himself among their sincerest Votaries.

Geo. You do me great honour, Madam, —I have no doubt but you are perfectly acquainted with the Muses. They shed their favours on a few only; but those who share them must, like you, be irresistible. I'll catch her Ladyship's style.

[*Aside.*]
Mr. H. [Aside.] Humph—I am glad he likes her.

Lady D. You men are so full of flattery! In Athens, in Lacedemon, that vice was for ages unknown——it was then the Athenians were the happiest, and the Lacedemonians the——

Bella. Oh mercy!——I have burnt my fingers in the most terrible manner.
[*Enter HARRIET from the Garden.*] I wish

wish the misfortune had happened to her Ladyship's tongue. [Aside.

Har. Dear Bella, I am quite concerned.

Bel. Pho!—I only meant to break in upon her harangue, there's no bearing so much Wisdom.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Drummond.

Enter Mr. DRUMMOND.

Mr. D. Benedicite!—ah!—my dear Godson!—why, this is an unexpected pleasure—I did not know you were arrived.

Geo. I have had that happiness only a few hours, Sir, and I was on the point of paying my devoirs to you at the Park.

Mr. D. Ungracious Rogue! a few hours, and not been with me yet!—however—stay where you are, stay where you are, George—you cannot come under my roof with safety now, I assure you; such a pair of eyes, such a bloom, such a shape!—Ah, Girls, Girls!

Har. Dear Mr. Drummond, of what, or whom, are you talking? You make me quite jealous.

Mr. D. Oh! you are all out-done, eclipsed—you have no chance with my *Incognita*—Then she has the prettiest foot—and moves a Grace!

Bel.

Bel. Teasing creature!

Mr. D. Pretty Bella!——well, it shall be satisfied. Mr. Hargrave, I wait on you, Sir, to request an apartment for a young Lady of beauty, and honour, who hath put herself under my protection.—But as I really think my house a dangerous situation for her, considering that I am single, young, and handsome, [*stroking his face*] I cannot in conscience expose her to it.—You, being a grave, orderly man, and having a couple of decent, well-behaved young women for a Daughter and Niece; I think she will be more agreeably protected here—and this is my business.

Mr. H. A young Lady who hath put herself under your protection! Who is she?

Mr. D. Her name she wishes to conceal.

Mr. H. That's very odd——Where did you meet with her?

Mr. D. At the house of a Widow Tenant of mine, a few miles from hence, where she had taken refuge from a marriage to which an Uncle would have forced her.——She had no companion but the good old Lady, whom I found employed in assisting her to weep, instead of consoling her.—In short, there were *reasons* to think her situation highly dangerous,

gerous, and I prevailed on her to leave it.

Mr. H. And so your credulity is again taken in, and the air of a weeping Beauty is the trap that caught you?——Ha! ha! ha!—Will you never be sick of impositions?

Mr. D. I don't remember that I was ever imposed on.

Mr. H. No! don't I know how many people you have plagued yourself about, who had not a grain of merit to deserve it?

Mr. D. I want *merit*, Mr. Hargrave; yet all the blessings of health and fortune have not been with-held from *me*.

Mr. H. Aye, aye—there's no getting you to hear reason on this subject.

Mr. D. 'Tis too late to reason now. The young Lady is at my house—I have promised to bring her here, and we must endeavour to raise the poor Girl's spirits. She would have spoil'd the prettiest face in England——beg pardon, Ladies—one of the prettiest faces, with weeping at the old Widows.

Bel. An old Widow, a pretty Girl, a Lover, a tyrannical Uncle—'tis a charming group for the amusement of a village circle.—I long to see this Beauty.

Lady D. Her beauty, according to Mr. Drummond, may be conspicuous enough

enough—but her pretensions to *birth* and *honour* seem to be a more doubtful matter.

Geo. Pardon me, Madam, why should we doubt of either? A Lady in such a situation has a right to protection; [*to his Father*] and I hope, Sir, you will not with-hold *yours*.

Mr. H. Oh, no, to be sure, George. —'Sbud! refuse protection to a fine Girl! —'twould be, with you, a crying sin, I warrant—but Mr. Drummond, I should suppose—

Mr. D. Come, be satisfied, the weaknesses with which you reproach me, might have induced me to have snatched her from an alarming situation without much examination: But, in compliment to your delicacy, I have made proper enquiries.—She was placed under the care of Mrs. Carlton by a person of credit.—She has dispatched a messenger to her Uncle, who, I presume, will be here to-morrow.

Har. Pray, Sir, permit us to wait on the Lady, and conduct her here; I am strongly interested for her.

Mr. H. 'Tis an odd affair——what say you to it, my Lady?

Lady D. As your Family seem desirous to receive her, Sir, I am sorry to perceive an impropriety in the request——but I should apprehend that any appearance of
encou-

encouragement to young Ladies in *disobedience*——particularly when accompanied with the glaring indecorum of an elopement——

Mr. H. Aye, very true——'Sbud, Mr. Drummond, how can you encourage such——

Mr. D. Madam, I do not mean to encourage, but to restore the young Lady to her family. She seems terrified at the peculiar severity of her Uncle's temper; so we'll put ourselves in form, receive him in full assembly, and divide his anger amongst us.——Your Ladyship, I'm sure, must be happy to render the recovery of the *first false step* as easy as possible.

Mr. H. Why aye, my Lady——there can be no harm in that, you know.

Lady D. Very well, Sir——if you think so, I can have no farther objection.

Mr. H. Well then, Harriet, you may go——I think.

Bella. And I with you, Cousin.

Mr. D. Come then, my pretty doves, I'll escort you.——George, steel your heart, steel your heart, you Rogue.

[*Exeunt Mr. D. BELLA, and HARRIET.*

Geo. It is steel'd, Sir.

Mr. H. You need not go, George——I want to speak to you.

Lady D. Bless me!——what does he intend to say now?——he's going to open the
affair

affair to his Son—well—these are the most awkward moments in a Woman's life—but one must go through it. [*Aside.*] I have letters to write, which I'll take this leisure to do,—if you'll pardon my absence, Gentlemen.

Mr. H. To be sure, Madam [*both bowing. Exit LADY D.*]—Well, George, how do you like that Lady?

Geo. Extravagantly, Sir,———I never saw a Lady so learned.

Mr. H. Oh, she's clever——she's an Earl's Sister too, and a forty thousand pounder, boy.

Geo. That's a fine fortune.

Mr. H. Aye, very fine, very fine——and then her interest!——suppose I could prevail with her—eh, George——if one could keep her in the family, I say—would not that be a stroke?

Geo. An alliance with so noble a family, Sir, is certainly a desirable circumstance.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. The Gentlemen are in the smoaking parlour, Sir.

Mr. H. Very well——are the pipes and Oetober in readiness?

Ser. Yes, Sir. [*Exit.*]

Mr. H. Well then, we'll talk over the affair to-morrow—what—I suppose your stomach is too squeamish for tobacco and strong

strong beer?———you'll find the Justice, and some more of your old friends there.

Geo. Pardon me, Sir, I made too free with the bottle at dinner, and have felt the effects in my head ever since———I believe a turn in the garden is a better recipe than the fumes of tobacco.

Mr. H. Well, well, we won't dispute the matter with you now, boy———but you know I don't like milkshops.

Geo. [*Smiling*] Nor I, Sir.

[*Bows and exit.*

Mr. H. Aye, aye, George is a brave Boy—Old England is disgraced by a set of whippers who affect to despise the jolly manners of their Ancestors, while they only serve to shew us, how greatly manners may be *alter'd* without being *mended*———'Sbud, I don't know that we are a bit wiser, happier, or greater, than we were in good old Bess's days———when our Men of Rank were robust, and our Women of Fashion buxom.

Enter JUSTICE.

Jus. Aye, aye, you are right, 'Squire———Give me a rosy buxom lass, with eyes that sparkle like the glasses we toast her in———adad, I'd drink her health till the world danced round like a top———But, what a plague d'ye stay here for? come into t'other room, and if you

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have

have a mind to make wise speeches there, we can drink in the mean time, and *then* what you say will have a proper effect.

Mr. H. Well, well, I'll go, but I want to consult you—I have been thinking whether this Greenwood estate—

Jus. Tush—you know very well, I can neither consider or advise, till I have had my brace—I am as dark, till the liquor sends its spirits into my brains, as a lantern without its candle—so, if you've any knotty point to propose, keep it till I'm enlighten'd.

Mr. H. Well, come along. *[Going.]*

Enter CLERK.

Cl. The people from the Crown, Sir, and the Rose, and the Antelope, are here again about their licences.

Jus. *[To Mr. H.]* There—this is what I got by coming for you—I charged the Butler not to let this dog in.—*[to the clerk]* Why, how can I help it?—bid 'em come again to-morrow—'tis of no consequence.

Cl. And here's a Pauper to be pass'd—a lame Man with four Children.

Mr. H. Well, turn him over to the Cook, and let him wait till we are at leisure.

Cl. And a Constable has brought up a man, for breaking into farmer Thompson's barn last night.

Jus.

Jus. Has he? [*seeming irresolute*] well, tell *him* to wait too—we are going to be busy now, and can't be disturb'd. But bid him take care he doesn't let the prisoner escape, as he did that dog Farlow, d'ye hear?

Cl. Yes, Sir——but——Justice Manly is now in the smoaking-room——I've spoke to him about the licences, and we mayn't have another bench this——

Jus. Will you please to march, Sir?

[*Exit CLERK.*

Mr. H. Well done, old Boy——Burn himself could not have dispatch'd business with more expedition. [*Going.*

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. The Miller is here, Sir, with a man that he catch'd with a hare that he had taken in the springe—but the poor fellow, please your Honour, has a large family. [*HARGR. and the Justice return.*

Mr. H. What! a Hare—Come along, Justice. [*Exit.*

A burst of laughter from the smoaking-room.

——*The Justice looks wistfully back, and then follows Mr. HARGRAVE.*

S C E N E, *the Garden.*

Enter GEORGE reading.

Geo. Here's a special Fellow of a Philosopher would persuade that Pleasure has

no existence, when bounteous Nature teems with her——She courts my senses in a thousand varied modes——She possesses herself of my understanding in the shape of Reason—and she seizes my heart in the form of Woman, dear, beautiful, all-subduing Woman.—And there is one—Memory, be faithful to her charms! Shew me the beautiful form, the animated face, the mind that beam'd in her eyes, the blushing smile that repaid my admiration, and raised an altar in my heart, on which every other passion is sacrificed—on which every hope, desire, and wish, is sanctified by her.

Enter BELLA.

Bella. Oh, monstrous!—George Hargrave moralizing in the garden, whilst the finest girl in England is in the parlour!—what is become of your gallantry?

Geo. Gone, sweet Cousin, gone.

Bel. Indeed! who has robb'd you of it?

Geo. A Woman.

Bel. Come then, and regain it from a Woman, and such a Woman——

Geo. Is she so beautiful?

Bel. Beautiful! look at me,—I myself am not so handsome.

Geo. Ha! ha! ha!——that, I confess, is an infallible criterion.——But I'll bet this whole volume of Wisdom, against
one

one of your Billet-doux, that she's not within fifty degrees of her who witch'd away my heart.

Bel. Witch'd it indeed, if in six weeks it has not made one excursion—I never knew you so constant before. However, I prophesy *her* charm is broke; the Divinity who will reign—perhaps for another six weeks—is coming down the steps with Harriet—but, that her rays may not dazzle your mortal sight, shelter yourself behind the clump, and examine her.

[GEORGE goes and returns.
Well, how d'ye like her?

Geo. Like her!—the air is all Ambrosia—every happy constellation is in conjunction—each bounteous star has lent its influence, and Venus guided the event.

Bel. Heyday!—what event? Sure this cannot be your Masquerade Lady!

Geo. It is, it is—she is the sweet Thief—she is my Wood Nymph—Oh, I am transported!

Bel. And I—amazed!—how can it—

Geo. No matter how——whether by chance or witchcraft—Now could I apostrophize—Pshaw—away, and at her feet—these transports— [Going.

Enter Mr. DRUMMOND.

Mr. Drum. So, so, so,——and pray, what's the cause of these transports?

Geo.

Geo. You are the cause—'tis to you, my dear Mr. Drummond, I am indebted for the happiness which dawns on me.

Mr. Drum. Then, God grant, my dear Boy, the dawn may not deceive thee—I wish it to brighten into the fairest day—But how have I been instrumental to all this?

Geo. That Lady I have seen before at a Masquerade—She possessed herself of my heart at once, but I despair'd of ever beholding her again—Pray present me—

[*Going.*

Mr. Drum. Hold, George, hold—perhaps you'd better never be presented; for, tho' you may have put her in possession of your heart, 'tis by no means an evidence, that she has had the same complaisance for you—Suppose, for instance, such a trifle as *hers* being engaged.

Bella. Oh unconscionable! to fancy the galloping imagination of a man in love, capable of so *reasonable* a supposition!—But, pray have so much decency, George, to postpone your *entrée* till you are more composed; I'll go, and prepare her for the reception of a strange creature, that you may appear to advantage. [*Exit.*

Geo. Advantage! oh, I will hope every advantage, from so fortunate a chance—her heart cannot—shall not be engaged—
and

and she shall be mine—Pardon, my dear Sir, these effusions of my joy.

Mr. D. I do pardon them—'tis an odd circumstance. Are you acquainted with the Lady's name?

Geo. No one knew her.——She seemed like an Angel descended to astonish her beholders, and vanish the moment she had fixt their hearts—Unluckily Mrs. Fitzherbert stopt me, and a jealous coxcomb in her train seized that moment, to hurry her out of the room.

Mr. D. That misfortune, perhaps, I can repair—but you seem so extravagantly disposed to rapture, that I hardly dare tell you I know something of her family.

Geo. Hah! I am rejoiced——for I am convinced you know nothing that will not justify my passion.

Mr. D. This eagerness to *believe* might have been so fatal, that I tremble for you——But you are fortunate—she is the Daughter of a deceased Major Morley—a man, to whose friendship, and elegance of manners, I was indebted for happy and rational hours, amidst the bustle of a Camp.

Geo. Fortunate indeed! for then my passion must have *your* sanction——but I thought you had not known—

Mr. D. I knew her Father's picture on her arm—but her delicacy is so alarmed at the idea of exposing the name of her

Family in such a situation, that she would not consent to be introduced here, but on condition of its being conceal'd.

Geo. Charming delicacy! I will keep her secret. My only consolation was, that such a Woman could not be long concealed, and it would have been the business of my life, till I had discover'd her——but your goodness has brought about the event——your goodness, to which I owe more than——

Mr. D. Nay, stop your acknowledgements, and don't arrogate to your own merits the affection I have for you; for, transcendent as without doubt they are, you owe great part of it to circumstances, in which they have very little concern.

Geo. I am contented to hold your esteem by any tie——But, dear Sir, the Lady——

Mr. D. Impatient Rogue!—Well, come, I'll introduce you,—and may the moment be auspicious! *[Exit.]*

Geo. May it! Oh Love, sweet Tyrant! I yield my heart to thee a willing slave—to Love I devote my future life—never more shall I experience the aching void of indifference, or know one moment unoccupied by thee. *[Exit.]*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE, a Court before the House.

Enter a HUNTER. A Flourish of Horns.

Hollo! hollo! ye boicks, Hargrave, ille,
ille, boia.

First ZOUNDS, 'tis almost seven;
Hunter. — [looking at his watch] the
scent will be cold—let's rouse the lazy
rogue with a song.

Second Hunt. Aye, a good thought—
come, begin.

S O N G.

Arouse, and break the bands of sleep;
Blush, Idler, blush, such hours to keep.
Somnus! what bliss canst thou bestow,
Equal to that which Hunters know,
Whether the mountains they attain,
Or swiftly dart across the plain?

Somnus! what joys canst thou bestow,
Equal to those which Hunters know?

Hark thro' the wood, how our music re-
sounds!

The horns re-ecchoed, more sweet by the
hounds.

Deep-throated and clear,
Our spirits they cheer;

They

*They give us such glee,
No danger we see,
But follow with pleasure:
'Tis joy beyond measure
To be the first in at the death—at the death,
To be, etc.*

Enter GEORGE from the House.

First Gent. Hah, my young Hercules!
——But how now, in this dress! don't
you hunt with us?

Geo. Oh, I have only changed liveries,
——I used to wear that of Adonis—but now
I serve his mistress—Venus.

Second Gent. And a most hazardous service you have chosen——I would rather subject myself to the fate of Acteon, than to the caprice and insolence of the handsomest Coquette in England.

Geo. Acteon's fate would be less than you'd deserve, if, knowing my Goddess, you should dare profane her with such epithets.

Second Gent. May I never start Puss, if I believe your Goddess to be more than a very Woman——that is, a being whose soul is vanity—taste, voluptuousness—form, deceitful——and manners, unnatural.

Geo. Heyday! turn'd Satyrist on the sex at eight and twenty!——What jilting Blowfalind has work'd this miracle?

Second

Second Gent. Faith, I take my copies from higher schools——Amongst the Blowfalinds there is still Nature and Honesty; but examine our Drawing-rooms, Operas, and Water-drinking places——you'll find the first turn'd fairly out of doors, and the last exchanged for Affectation and Hypocrisy——so henceforward [*snacking his whip*] I abandon all Ladies, but those of the woods, and chase only the harmless game, to which my sagacious hounds conduct me. [*Exit.*]

Geo. Ha! ha!—and in a short time be fit society for your hounds only. Good morning, Sir.

Enter Mr. HARGRAVE and the JUSTICE.

Mr. H. So, George——Come, you'd better mount——I'll give you a Lecture upon Air, and the advantages of a good Constitution, on our Downs, worth all you cou'd hear in a musty College these fifty years.

Geo. I beg, Sir, to be excus'd this morning——to-morrow I'll resume my usual post, and lead where you only will venture to follow me.

Mr. H. Well—we shall put you to the test. [*Exit.*]

Justice to Geo. Yes, yes, you're a keen Sportsman——I saw the Game you are in pursuit

purſuit of, ſcudding away to the garden—beat the buſhes, and I'll warrant you'll ſtart her, and run her down too.

Third Gent. Egad! I ſtarted a fine young Puſs a few days ago——She ſeem'd ſhy, and made her doublings; but I ſtuck to the ſcent, and ſhou'd infallibly have got her, if that fly poaching rogue, Drummond, had not laid a ſpringe in her way.

Juſtice. Why, ſhe's the very Puſs I mean; he hous'd her here. [*Exit.*

Third Gent. Oh, ho! then I ſuppoſe he only pointed the game for you——Sweet Sir, your humble——After College commons, a coarſer diſh than Pheasant, I think, might have gone down.

Geo. Your whip, Sir—your wit wants laſhing. To talk thus of Mr. Drummond, whom you *do* know, is not more insolent than your profanation of a Lady whom you *do not* know.

Third Gent. O! cry you mercy—Plague take me if I quarrel for any wench in England——You are heartily welcome to her, Sir, only I hope another time you'll be honeſt, and hunt without a ſtalking-horſe. [*Exit.*

Geo. Barbarian! How critically did Mr. Drummond relieve the lovely Girl——This brute had diſcovered her, and ſhe would have ſuffered every indignity that
Igno-

Ignorance, supported by the pride of Fortune, could have inflicted. In the garden—that's fortunate beyond my expectation—'midst groves and fountains—the very scene where a lover should tell his tale—and the sweet consciousness which beamed in her eyes last night, flatters me that she will not *hate* me for my tale—I go, in all the confidence of hope. [Exit.

S C E N E, *the Garden.*

Enter E M I L Y.

Em. What an heavenly morning!—surely 'tis in *England* that Summer keeps her court—for she's no where else so lovely.—And what a sweet garden this is!—But tell me, my heart, is it the brightness of the morning, the verdure of the garden, the melody of the birds, that gives thee these enchanting sensations?—Ah, no!—it is that thou hast found thy Lord—it is, that I have again seen the Man, who, since I first beheld him, has been the only image in my mind.—How different from the empty, the presuming Baldwin!—yet, I owe *him* this obligation, if his hateful perseverance had not forced me from London, I might never have seen, but once, the Man who, *that once*, possess'd himself of my tenderest wishes—Ha! [*starting.*]

Enter

Enter GEORGE.

Geo. Abroad so early, Madam!—the fine Ladies in London are yet in their first sleep.

Em. It would have been impossible, Sir, to have resisted the chearful call of the Hunters, if the morning had been less enticing.

Geo. Oh, do not imagine yourself obliged to the Hunters, Madam, it was my good Genius—I thank her—who inspired them, and did me the favour to lead me here.

Em. If she usually influences you to no better purpose, her claims to your gratitude are but weak.

Geo. 'Till lately I thought so, and supposed myself influenced by the worst Genius that ever fell to the lot of a poor mortal—but she has entirely retrieved herself in my opinion, and by two or three capital strokes has made me forget her unlucky pranks, and believe her one of the best disposed Sylphs in all the regions of Fancy.

Em. [*Smiling.*] You recommend this aërial attendant very strongly—Have you any intention to part from her?

Geo. I would willingly exchange her—if your Genius would be so obliging to take a fancy to me—I'll accept her with all my heart—and give you mine.

Em.

Em. You wou'd lose by the exchange.

Geo. Impossible!——for my quondam friend would say a thousand things for me, that I could not for myself—so I should gain your good opinion—and that would be *well gained*, whatever I might lose to attain it.

Em. Your Genius is, at least, a gallant one, I perceive—but I was on the point of leaving the garden, Sir.——The Ladies, I imagine, are risen by this time.

Geo. Indeed they are not, but if they should——these are precious moments, which I must not lose—may I presume to use them in telling you how happy I am, in the event which placed you in my Father's house?——but you have, perhaps, forgot the presumptuous Tancred, who gave such disturbance to the Gentleman honour'd by protecting you, at the Masquerade?

Em. No, Sir, I remember—and, if I don't mistake, you were nearly engaged in a *fracas* with that Gentleman—I was happy, when I observ'd you stopt by a mask, and seized that moment to leave the room.

Geo. A moment, Madam, which I have never ceas'd to regret 'till now—but *that* which I at present possess, is a felicity so unexpected, and unhop'd for——

Em.

Em. You forget, Sir, these gallantries are out of place here—under a mask, a Shepherd may sigh, or an Eastern Prince amuse himself in saying the most extravagant things—but they know there are delicacies to be observed in real life, quite incompatible with the freedoms of a Masquerade.

Geo. Whilst you are thus severe on mere gallantries, I will venture to hope that a most tender and respectful passion will be treated more favourably.

Em. Sir!

Geo. I comprehend, Madam, what your delicacy must feel, and will therefore only add, that from the first moment I beheld you, my heart has known no other object. *You* have been the Mistress of its Wishes—and you *are* the Mistress of its Fate.

Em. [*Hesitatingly*] Indeed, Sir, this declaration, at a time when I must appear in so strange a light to your family, hurts me greatly—I can scarcely believe you mean it a compliment—but, surely, my situation here ought—

Geo. I acknowledge, Madam, the confession I have dared to make, is premature—it is ill timed—nothing can excuse it, but the peculiarity of our situation.—When I reflect, that in a few moments your Uncle may arrive, that he
may

may snatch you from us, and that such an opportunity never may be mine again——

Enter Mr. DRUMMOND.

Mr. D. So, so, my young ones, have I found you? 'tis a most delicious morning——but is it usual with you, Madam, to taste the air so early?

Em. Yes, Sir——in the Country, at least——I seldom murder such hours in sleep.

Mr. D. Aye, 'tis to that practice you are indebted for the roses in your cheeks——What, I suppose, you brought the Lady into the garden, George, to read her a lecture on the Vegetable system—to explain the nature and cause of Heat—or, perhaps, more abstracted subjects have engaged——

Geo. Stop, dear Sir—I assure you I am not abstracted enough to enter on these subjects with such an object before me——I found the Lady here, and had scarcely paid her my morning compliments when you appeared.

Mr. D. For which you do not thank me, I presume——but come, Madam, you are *my* ward, 'till I have the pleasure of presenting you to your Uncle; and I come to conduct you to breakfast.

George, you may follow; but take care you keep your distance.

[*Exeunt Mr. D. and EMILY.*

Geo. Distance!—as well might you persuade the shadow to forsake its Sun, or erring mortals give up hopes of mercy——With what sweet confidence she gives her hand to Mr. Drummond!——if these are the privileges of Age, I'll be young no longer. [Exit.

SCENE, *Lady DINAH's Dressing-Room.*

Lady DINAH dressing, SUSAN attending.

Lady Dinah. Both in the garden——and in deep conversation!

Susan. It appear'd so, my Lady, as I saw them from the window——he look'd eagerly in her face; and she blush'd and seem'd confused.

Lady D. Confused Indeed!——yes, so the Impertinent affected to appear last night——tho' it was evident she had neither eyes nor thoughts but for Mr. Hargrave's Son——who paid her those attentions which, from the present habits of life, are paid to every Woman——tho', I think Mr. George Hargrave should be superior to these *modern gallantries*.

Sus. I dares to say she is some impostor——Husbands in good truth are not so plenty,

plenty, that a woman need run away to escape one.

Lady D. I have no doubt of her being a low person——and as to her prettiness, 'tis of the kind one sees in wooden Dolls——cherry colour cheeks, and eyes, that from the total absence of expression might be taken for glass.

Sus. I wonder Mr. Hargrave did not stand by his own opinion, and let her stay where she was; but whatever Mr. Drummond says is law here.

Lady D. Because Mr. Hargrave imagines he'll make his Son his heir——but if he does, he'll only share with the paupers of the neighbouring villages; for these Mr. Drummond seems to consider his family; and I am mistaken, if he does n't find it a pretty expensive one.

Sus. Oh, Ma'am, he believes every melancholy tale that's told him as a proof of his piety—Here's the Bow, my Lady—but as he fancies her prettyness was in danger, he had better have kept her in his own house, and stood guard himself.

Lady D. Aye—that employment, or any other that would keep him at home, might be useful—Want of rest [*looking in the glass*] absolutely transforms me—the detestable Horns, and their noisy accompaniment, waked me from the most de-

lightful dream—How do I look to-day, Susan?

Suf. Oh, charmingly, my Lady.

Lady D. 'Tis a most provoking circumstance, the colour of my hair should be so soon changed——but Mrs. Gibson's Liquid entirely hides that accident, I believe.

Suf. Entirely, my Lady—and then, her Bloom, it is impossible to distinguish from nature.

Lady D. You need not speak so loud. In compliance with the custom of modern times, a woman is forced to keep the use of these sort of things as secretly as she would an Illegitimate Birth. It was not so among the Antients——The Roman Ladies made a point of excelling in Arts of this kind; and the Empress Poppea was not ashamed to carry in her train five hundred Asses, in whose milk she bathed every morning for the benefit of her complexion.

Suf. Five hundred Asses in *one* Lady's train!——thank Heaven, we have no such engrossing now-a-days—*our* Toasts have all their full share.

Lady D. Indeed! Mrs. Susan, [*half smiling*] this wench has ideas. Pray what do you think of the young Collegian?

Suf. Oh, my Lady, he is the sweetest, smartest Man——I think he is exactly like
like

like the picture of your Ladyship's Brother, that died when he was eighteen.

Lady D. People used to say *that* Brother, and myself, bore a strong resemblance.

Suf. I dare to say you did, my Lady; for there's something in the turn of young Mr. Hargrave's face, vastly like your Ladyship's. [*Laughing behind her.*]

Lady D. Well, Susan——I believe I may trust you——I think you can be faithful.

Suf. Most surely, my Lady—I would rather die than betray your Ladyship.

Lady D. Well, then—I protest I hardly know how to acknowledge it—But——

[*Suf.* But what, my Lady?——your Ladyship alarms me.

Lady D. I too am alarm'd—but I know your faith——[*sighs.*] There will soon be a most intimate and never to be dissolved connexion between me—and—young Mr. Hargrave.

Suf. Young Mr. Hargrave, Madam!

Lady D. Yes, *Young* Mr. Hargrave, Madam——What dost stretch thy eyes so widely at, wench?——Mr. George Hargrave, I say, is to be my Husband——I am to be his Wife——Is it past thy comprehension?

Suf. I most humbly beg your Ladyship's pardon——it was my surprise—the whole

house concludes your Ladyship is to marry Old Mr. Hargrave—but, to be sure, the Son is a much more suitable match for your Ladyship.

Lady D. Old Mr. Hargrave, indeed! —the whole house is very impertinent in its conclusions——Go, and bring the Bergamot hither. [*Exit Sus.*] I marry Old Mr. Hargrave! monstrous absurdity! and by so preposterous an union to become the mother of that fine fellow, his Son!——'twould be insupportable——no, Mistress Susan, 'tis Young Mr. Hargrave I am to marry. [*Enter SUSAN with the Bergamot.*]——Here, scent that Handkerchief, while I write to my agent to prepare matters for the writings. [*Exit.*] Susan alone, scenting the handkerchief.

Sus. To prepare matters for the writings! a very fine business indeed; and what you'll sorely repent of, my good Lady, take my word for it—All those scented waters, nor any other waters, will be able to keep up your spirits this time twelvemonth——A “never to be dissolved connexion,” between fifty and twenty-one, ha! ha! ha!—I shall burst with the ridiculous secret——I must find Jarvis, and give it vent——“never to be dissolved connexion!”——ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*]

SCENE

SCENE, *an Apartment.*

Enter GEORGE, HARRIET and BELLA.

Bel. What transformations this love can make! You look as grave, George, and speak as sententiously, as an Old-Bailey Fortune-teller.

Geo. And is it only to preserve your spirits, Bella, that you keep your heart so cold?

Bel. The recipe is certainly not a bad one, if we may judge from the effects of the opposite element on your spirits—but I advise you, whatever you do, not to assume an appearance of gravity—'tis the most dangerous character in the world.

Geo. How so?

Bel. Oh, the advantages you would lose by it are inconceivable. While you can sustain that of a giddy, thoughtless, undesigning, *great Boy*, all the impertinent and foolish things you commit will be excus'd—laugh'd at—nay, if accompanied by a certain manner, they will be applauded—but do the same things with a grave reflecting face, and an important air—and you'll be condemned, *nem. con.*

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Charles Seymour is driving up the avenue, Sir. [*Exit.*

Geo. Is he?——I am rejoiced——

Har. Sir Charles Seymour, Brother?
——I thought you told us yesterday he was on the point of marriage.

Geo. Well, my dear Harriet, and what then? Is his being on the point of marriage any reason why he should not be here?——he is even now hastening to pay his devoirs to the Lady——I left him yesterday at a friend's house on the road, and he promised to call on us in his way to-day——but I hear him—— [*Exit.*

Bel. Harriet, you look quite pale——I had no conception that Sir Charles was of *serious* consequence to you.

Har. My dear Bella, I am ashamed of myself—I'll go with you to your dressing-room; I must not see him while I look so ridiculously——I dread my Brother's raillery.

Bel. Come then, hold by me. Deuce take it, what business have women with hearts?—If I could influence the House, handsome men should be shut out of society, 'till they grew harmless, by becoming Husbands. [*Exeunt.*

Enter GEORGE and Sir CHARLES.

Geo. Ha! the birds are flown.

Sir Cha. Let us pursue 'em then.

Geo. Pho—they are not worth pursuing—Bella's a Coquette, and Harriet's in love.

Sir

Sir Ch. Harriet in love!

Geo. Aye, she's in for't, depend on't—
but that's nothing, *I* have intelligence
for thee, man——my *Incognita's* found,
she's now in the house—my beauteous
Wood Nymph!

Sir Cha. Miss Hargrave's heart an-
other's!

Geo. Miss Hargrave's heart another's—
why, my Sister's heart is certainly engag-
ed—but how's all this?

Sir Ch. O George! I love—I love your
Sister—to distraction, doat on her.

Geo. A pretty time for the mountain to
give up its burthen truly! Why did you
not tell me this before? If your heart had
been as open to me, as mine has ever
been to you, I might have serv'd you;
but now—

Sir Ch. Oh, reproach me not, but pity
me—I love your Sister—long have lov'd
her.

Geo. And not intrust your love to *me*!
—You distrusted me, Charles, and you'll
be properly punish'd.

Sir Ch. Severely am I punish'd—fool,
fool, that I was, thus to have built a su-
perstructure of happiness for all my life
to come, that in one moment dissolves
into air! I cannot see your Sister—I must
leave you.

Geo.

Geo. Indeed, you shall not leave me, Seymour——On what grounds did you build your hopes, that you seem so greatly disappointed?—Had my Sister accepted your addresses?

Sir Ch. No—I never presumed to make her any—my fortune was so small, that I had no hopes of obtaining your Father's consent, and therefore made it a point of honour not to endeavour to gain her affection.

Geo. Yes, yes, you took great care.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Ch. But my Uncle's death having removed every cause of fear on that head, I flatter'd myself I had nothing else to apprehend.

Geo. Courage, my friend, and your difficulties may vanish. 'Tis your humble distant lovers who have sung thro' every age of their scornful Phillis's——You never knew a bold fellow, who could love Women without mistaking 'em for Angels, whine about their cruelty.

Sir Ch. Do you not tell me your Sister's heart is engaged?—Then what have I to struggle for? it was her heart I wish'd to possess. Could Miss Hargrave be indelicate enough, which I am sure she could not, to bestow her hand on me without it—I would reject it.

Geo.

Geo. Bravo!—nobly resolved! keep it up by all means.—Come now, I'll introduce you to one of the finest Girls you ever saw in your life—but remember you are not to suffer your heart to be interested there, for that's my quarry, and death to the man who attempts to rob me of my prize!

Sir Cb. Oh, you are very secure, I assure you—my heart is adamant from this moment. [*Exeunt.*

The Garden. Enter Mr. HARGRAVE and a SERVANT.

Mr. Har. Run and tell my Son I want to speak to him here directly. [*Exit SERVANT.*] Her forty thousand pounds will just enable me to buy the Greenwood Estate,—and to my certain knowledge, that young Rakehelly won't be able to keep it to his back much longer. We shall then have more land than any family in the country, and a Borough of our own into the bargain. Humph—But suppose George should not have a mind to marry her now? Why then,—why then—as to his mind, when two parties differ, the weaker must give way—the match is for the advancement of your fortune, says I; and if it can't satisfy your mind, you must teach it what I have always taught you—obedience.—[*Enter GEO.*] Oh,

Oh, George, I sent for you into the garden, that we might have no interruptions; for, as I was saying, there's an affair of consequence I want to talk to you about.

Geo. I am all attention, Sir.

Mr. H. I don't design that you shall return to College any more—I have other views, which I hope will not be disagreeable to you—You—you like Lady Dinah, you say?

Geo. [*Hesitatingly*] She is a Lady of great erudition, without doubt.

Mr. H. I don't know what your notions may be of her age; I could wish her a few years younger, but——

Geo. Pardon me, Sir, I think there can be no objection to her age; and the preference her Ladyship gives to our family, is certainly a high compliment.

Mr. H. Ho, ho, then you are acquainted already with what I was going to communicate to you——I am surprised at that.

Geo. Matrimonial negotiations, Sir, are seldom long concealed; 'tis a subject on which every body is fond of talking—the young, in hopes that their turn will come;—and those who are older——

Mr. H. By way of giving a fillip to their memories, I suppose you mean, George, eh?—well, I am glad you are so merry; I
was

was a little uneasy about what you might think of this affair—tho' I never mention'd it in my life—but perhaps, Lady Dinah may have hinted it to her woman, and then I should not wonder if the whole parish knew it. However, you have no objection, and that's enough—tho' if you had, I must have had my way, George.

Geo. Without doubt, Sir.

Mr. H. Have you spoken to Lady Dinah on the subject?

Geo. Spoke!—n - - o, Sir, I could not think of addressing Lady Dinah on so delicate an affair without your permission.

Mr. H. Well then, my dear Boy—I would have you speak to her now, and, I think, the sooner the better.

Geo. To be sure, Sir—I shall obey you—

Mr. H. Well, you have set my heart at rest—I am as happy as a Prince. I never fixt my mind on any thing in my life, so much as I have done on this marriage, and it would have gall'd me sorely if you had been against it—but you are a good Boy, George, a very good Boy, and I'll go in, and prepare Lady Dinah for your visit. [Exit.

Geo. Why, my dear Father, you are quite elated on the prospect of your nuptials—but why must I make speeches to Lady Dinah? I am totally ignorant of the mode

mode that elderly Gentlemen adopt on these occasions.

Enter BELLA.

Bel. What, have you been opening your heart to your Father, George?

Geo. No, faith—he has been opening his to me—He has been making me the confident of his passion for Lady Dinah.

Bel. No! ha, ha, ha, is it possible?—what stile does he talk in? is it flames and darts, or esteem and sentiment?

Geo. I don't imagine my good Father thinks of either—her fortune, I presume, is his object; and I shall not venture to hint an objection; for contradiction, you know, only lends him fresh ardor. Where is Seymour and Harriet?

Bel. Your Sister is in the drawing-room, and Sir Charles I just now saw in the Orange-walk, with his arms folded thus——and his eyes fixt on a shrub, in the most *penseroso* style you can conceive—Why, he has no appearance of a happy youth on the verge of Bridegroomism.

Geo. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Bel. Why do you laugh?

Geo. At the embarrassment I have thrown the simpletons into—ha, ha, ha!

Bel. What simpletons?—what embarrassment?

Geo.

Geo. That you cannot guess, my sweet Cousin, with all your penetration.

Bel. I shall expire, if you won't let me know it—now do—pray, George—come—be pleas'd to tell it me. [*curtseying.*]

Geo. No, no, you look so pretty while you are coaxing, that I must—must see you in that humour a little longer.

Bel. That's unkind—come, tell me this secret——tho' I'll be hang'd if I don't guess it.

Geo. Nay, then I must tell you; for if you shou'd find it out, I shall lose the pleasure of obliging you.—Seymour and my Sister doat on one another—and I have made each believe, that the other has different engagements.

Bel. Oh, I am rejoiced to hear it.

Geo. Rejoic'd! I assure you, I am highly offended.

Bel. At what? Sir Charles is your friend, and every way an eligible match for your Sister.

Geo. Very true——I am happy in their attachment, and therefore offended.——Sir Charles has been as chary of his secret, as if I had not deserv'd his confidence.

Bel. I believe he never address'd your Sister.

Geo. Aye, so he pretends, he never made love to her——ridiculous subterfuge!—he stole into her heart by the help
of

of those silent tender observances, which are the surest battery when there's time to play 'em off——If any man had *thus* obtain'd my Sister's heart, left her a prey to disappointment, and then said——*he meant nothing*——my sword should have taught him, that his conduct was not less dishonourable, than if he had knelt at her feet, and sworn a million oaths.

Bel. Why, this might be useful——but, mercy upon us! if every girl had such a snap-dragon of a Brother—no Beau—and very few pretty fellows would venture to come near her—pray, when did you form this mischievous design?

Geo. Oh, Sir Charles has been heaping up the measure of his offences some time——'twould have diverted you to have seen the tricks he play'd to get Harriet's picture. At last he beg'd it, to get the drapery copied for his Sister's; and I know 'tis at this moment in his bosom, tho' he has sworn an hundred times 'tis still at the Painter's.

Bel. Ha!—I'll fly and tell her the news——If I don't mistake, she'd rather have her picture there than in the Gallery of Beauties at Hampton. [*Going.*]

Geo. 'Sdeath!—stop—Why, are not you angry?—shut out by parchment provisos from all the flutters of Courtship yourself, you had a right to participate in Harriet's.

Bel.

Bel. Very true; this might be sufficient for me——But what pleasure can you have in tormenting two hearts so attach'd to each other?

Geo. I do mean to plague 'em a little; and it will be the greatest favour we can do them—for they are such sentimental people, you know—that they'll blush, and hesitate, and torment each other, six months before they come to an explanation——But, by alarming their jealousy, they'll betray themselves in as many hours.

Bel. Oh, cry your mercy!—So there's not one grain of mischief in all this; and you carry on the plan in downright charity—well, really in that light there is some reason——

Geo. Aye, more reason than is necessary to induce you to join in it—even tho' there were mischief—so promise me your assistance with a good grace.

Bel. Well, I do promise; for I really think——

Geo. Oh, I'll accept of very flight assurances.

Bel. A-propos! Here's Harriet——I'm just as angry as you wish me: leave us, and you shall have a good account of her.

Enter HARRIET.

Har. Brother! Mr. Drummond, I fancy, wonders at your absence: he's alone with the Lady——

Geo. Then he possesses a privilege that half mankind would grudge him. [*Exit.*

Bel. Have you seen Sir Charles yet?

Har. Indeed I have not—I confess I was so weak, as to retire twice from the drawing-room, because I heard his voice—tho' I was conscious my absence must appear odd, and fearful the cause might be suspected.

Bel. Ah!——pray be careful that you give *him* in particular no reason to guess at that—I advise you to treat him with the greatest coldness.

Har. Most certainly I shall, whatever it costs me——It would be the most cruel mortification, if I thought he would ever suspect my weakness—I wonder, Bella, if the Lady whom he is to marry, is so handsome as George describes her.

Bel. Of what consequence is that to you, child? never think about it; if you suffer your mind to be soften'd with reflections of that sort, you'll never behave with a proper degree of scorn to him.

Har. Oh, do not fear it; I assure you, I possess a vast deal of scorn for him.

Bel.

Bel. I am sure you fib, [*aside.*]—Well now, by way of example, he is coming this way, I see.

Har. Is he?—come then, let us go.

Bel. Yes, yes, you are quite a Heroine, I perceive——Surely you will not fly to prove your indifference?—Stay and mortify him with an appearance of carelessness and good humour. For instance—when he appears, look at him with such an unmeaning eye, as one glances over an acquaintance shabbily dress'd at Ranelagh—and when he speaks to you, look another way; and then, suddenly recollecting yourself,—What is that you were saying, Sir Charles? I beg pardon, I really did not attend—then, without minding his answer——Bella, I was thinking of that sweet fellow who open'd the ball with Lady Harriet—Did you ever see such eyes? and then the air with which he danced!—O Lord! I never shall forget him.

Har. You'll find me a bad scholar, I believe—however, I'll go through the interview, if you'll assist me.

Bel. Fear me not.

Enter Sir CHARLES.

Sir Ch. Ladies—this is rather unexpected—I hope I don't intrude.

Bel. Sir Charles Seymour can never be an unwelcome intruder.

Sir Ch. Miss Hargrave—I have not had the happiness of paying my respects to you since I arriv'd—I hope you have enjoyed a perfect share of health and spirits, since I left Hargrave-Place. [*Confusedly.*]

Har. I never have been better, Sir; and my spirits are seldom so good as they are now. [*Affecting gaiety.*]

Sir Ch. Your looks indeed, Madam, speak you in possession of that happiness I wish you [*sighing*—You, Miss Sydney, are always in spirits.

Bel. In general, Sir—I have not wisdom enough to be troubled with reflections to destroy my repose.

Sir Ch. Do you imagine it then a proof of wisdom to be unhappy?

Bel. One might think so; for wise folks are always grave.

Har. Then I'll never attempt to be wise—henceforward I'll be gaiety itself—I am determined to devote myself to pleasure, and only live to laugh.

Bel. Perhaps you may not always find subjects Cousin, unless you do as I do—laugh at your own absurdities.

Har. Oh, fear not—we need not always look at home; the world abounds with subjects for mirth, and the men will be so obliging as to furnish a sufficient

cient number, when every other resource fails.

Sir Ch. Miss Hargrave was not always so severe.

Har. Fye, Sir Charles—do not mistake pleasantry for severity—but exuberant spirits frequently overflow in impertinence; therefore I pardon your thinking that mine do.

Sir Ch. Impertinence! Surely, Madam, you cannot suppose I meant to——

Har. Nay, Bella, I appeal to you; did not Sir Charles intimate some such thing?

Bel. Why—a—I don't know——To be sure there was a kind of a distant intimation——tho' perhaps Sir Charles only means that you are awkward—ha! ha!—But consider, Sir, this character of Harriet's is but lately assumed—and new characters, like new stays, never sit till they have been worn.

Sir Ch. Very well, Ladies; I will not dispute your right to understand my expressions in what manner you please—but I hope you will allow me the same—and that, when a Lady's eyes speak disdain, I may, without offence, translate it into Love.

Har. 'Tis an error that men are apt to fall into; but the eyes talk in an idiom, warm from the heart; and so skilful an

observer as Sir Charles will not mistake their language.

Sir Ch. Are they alike intelligible to all?

Har. So plain, that nine times out of ten, at least, mistakes must be wilful.

Sir Ch. Then pray examine mine Madam, and by the report you make I shall judge of your proficiency in their dialect.

Bella. Oh! I'll examine yours, Sir Charles—I am a better judge than Harriet—let me see—aye, 'tis so—in one I perceive love and jealousy—in the other, hope and a wedding. Now am I not a Prophetess?

Sir Ch. Prove but one in the last article, and I ask no more of Fate—now—will you read? Madam!

Har. You are so intirely satisfied with Bella's translation, Sir, that I will not run the risk of mortifying you with a different construction—come, Cousin, let us return to our company.

Bel. [*Apart*] Eye! that air of pique is enough to ruin all.

Sir Ch. Do you not find the garden agreeable, Miss Hargrave? I began to think it charming.

Har. Perfectly agreeable, Sir—but the happy never fly society—I wonder to see you alone. Come, Bella.

Bel. Bravo!

[*Exeunt BELLA and HARRIET.*

Sir

Sir Ch. Astonishing! What is become of that sweetness—that dove-like softness, which stole into my heart, and deceived me into dreams of bliss? She flies from me, and talks of her company, and returning to her society——Oh Harriet! oh my Harriet! thy society is prized by me beyond that of the whole world; and still to possess it, with the hope that once glowed in my bosom, would be a blessing for which I would sacrifice every other, that Nature or Fortune has bestowed. [Exit.]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *Lady DINAH's Dressing Room.**Lady DINAH and Mr. HARGRAVE sitting.*

Mr. H. I AM surprised, Madam, at your thinking in this manner—when I spoke to my Son this morning, I assure you, he express'd a great deal of satisfaction about the affair—I wonder indeed he has not been here.

Lady D. Now, I could almost blame you, Mr. Hargrave—pardon me—but you have certainly been too precipitate—your Son has scarcely been at home four and twenty hours, and cannot possibly have received any impression, or formed an idea of my character.—He has been so much engaged, indeed, with other persons, that I have had no opportunity of conversing with him; and how, so circumstanced, can he have form'd a judgment of his own heart?

Mr. H. Good God! Madam, he has given the best proof in the world that he has formed a judgment; for he told me this morning, that the prospect of the marriage made him very happy.—I don't know

know what other proof a man can give that he knows his own heart; and let me tell you, Madam, I have accustomed my children to pay a proper regard to my inclination.

Lady D. I am apprehensive, Sir, that Mr. George Hargrave's obedience may influence him more than I cou'd wish—and I assure you, I cannot think of uniting myself to any man, who does not prefer me for my own sake, without adverting to any other consideration.

Mr. H. His obedience to me, influence him more than you could wish!——why really I don't understand you, my Lady——Zounds! I thought she had been a sensible Woman. [*Aside.*]

Lady D. Not understand me, Mr. Hargrave! I have too high an opinion of your good sense, to suppose that I am unintelligible to you.

Mr. H. My opinion, Madam, is, that an obedient Son is likely to make a kind Husband—George is a fine young fellow as any in England, though I his father say it, and there's not a woman in the kingdom, who might not be proud to call him her husband—too obedient—

Lady D. Bless me! this man has no ideas [*aside.*]—You mistake me, Mr. Hargrave; I do not mean to lessen the merit of obedience in your Son—but, I confess,

fess, I wish him to have a more delicate, a more tender motive, for offering his hand to me.

Mr. H. Look ye, Madam—you have a great understanding, to be sure—and I confess you talk above my reach—but I must nevertheless take the liberty to blame your Ladyship; a person of your Ladyship's experience—and, allow me to say, your date in the world, must know that there are occasions in which we should not be too nice.

Lady D. Too nice! Mr. Hargrave—
[*Rising.*]

Mr. D. Aye—too nice, my Lady,—a Boy and Girl of sixteen, have time before 'em—they may be whimsical, and be off and on, and play at shilly-shally as long as they have a mind.—but, my Lady, at a certain season we must leave off these tricks, or be content to go to the grave old Batchelors and—

[*Shrugging his shoulders.*]

Lady D. I am utterly astonished, Mr. Hargrave—you surely mean to offend me—you insult me.

Mr. H. No—by no means—I would not offend your Ladyship for the world; I have the highest respect for you, and shall rejoice to call you my Daughter—if you are not so, it will be your own fault—for George, I am sure, is ready the
moment

moment you will give your consent——
The writings shall be drawn when you
think proper, and the marriage consum-
mated without delay.

Lady D. Well, Sir——I really do not
know what to say——when Mr. George
Hargrave shall imagine it a proper period
to talk to me on the subject—I—I—

Mr. H. Well, well, Madam—I allow
this is a topic on which a Lady does not
chuse to explain herself but to the prin-
cipal——I waited on your Ladyship only
to inform you that I had talked to my
Son concerning the affair, and to incline
you, when he waits on you, to give him
a favourable hearing.

Lady D. Mr. Hargrave——a person of
your Son's merit is entitled to a proper
attention from any Woman he addresses.

Mr. H. There—now we are right again
—I was fearful that you had not liked my
Boy: and that your difficulties arose from
that quarter——but since you like Geor-
ge, 'tis all very well, very well.

Lady D. Mr. Hargrave!——I am sur-
prised at your conceiving so unjust an idea
—Mr. George Hargrave is, as you have
said, a match for any woman, whatever
be her rank.

Mr. H. My dear Lady Dinah——I am
quite happy to hear you say so—I am sure
George loves *you*—odds bobs, I hear him
on

on the stairs——I'll go and send him to you this moment, and he shall tell you so himself——you'll surely believe *him*.

[*Exit.*

Lady D. Mr. Hargrave, Mr. Hargrave! —blefs me, what an impetuous obstinate old Man—what can I do?——I am in an exceedingly indelicate situation——he will tell his Son that I am waiting here in expectation of a declaration of love from him—Sure never woman was in so awkward an embarras—I *wish* the Son possessed a little of the Father's impetuosity—this would not then have happened.

Enter GEORGE.

Geo. Your Ladyship's most obedient servant.

Lady D. S—i—r [*curtseying confusedly.*]

Geo. My Father permits me, Madam, to make my acknowledgments to your Ladyship, for the honour you design our Family.

Lady D. I must confess, Sir, this interview is somewhat unexpected—it is indeed quite premature—I was not prepared for it, and—I am really in great confusion.

Geo. I am sensible, Madam, a visit of this kind to a Lady of your delicacy must be a little distressing—but I intreat you to be composed——I hope you will have no reason to regret a resolution which
myself,

myself, and the rest of the family, have so much cause to rejoice in—and I assure your Ladyship, every thing on my part, that can contribute to your felicity, you shall always command.

Lady D. You are very *polite*, Sir—We have had so little opportunity of conversing, Mr. Hargrave, that I am afraid you express rather your Father's sentiments than your own. It is impossible, indeed, from so short a knowledge, that you can have formed any sentiments of me yourself.

Geo. Pardon me, Madam, my sentiments for you are full of respect—and I am convinced your qualities will excite the veneration of all who have the honour of being connected with you.—My Father could hardly have done it better. [*Aside.*]

Lady D. Why, this young Man has certainly been taught to make love by his Tutor at College. [*Aside.*]

Geo. I am concerned this visit seems so embarrassing to your Ladyship—I certainly should have deferr'd it, from an apprehension of its being disagreeable, but, in obedience to my Father, I——

Lady D. Then it is to your Father, Sir, that I am indebted for the favour of seeing you.

Geo. By no means, Madam—it would certainly have been my *inclination* to have waited

waited on your Ladyship, but my Father's wishes induced me to hasten it.

Lady D. Really! a pretty extraordinary confession! [*Aside.*]—I think it necessary to assure you, Sir, that—that this affair has been brought thus forward by Mr. Hargrave—and the proposals he made, in which it was evident, *his whole heart* was concern'd, were quite unexpected.

Geo. I have not the least doubt of it, Madam, nor am I at all surpris'd at my Father's earnestness, on a subject so interesting—What can she mean by apologizing to me? [*Aside.*]

Lady D. It would certainly have been proper, Sir, to have allowed you time to have formed a judgment yourself, on a point which concerns you so highly.

Geo. The time has been quite sufficient, Madam—I highly approve the steps my Father has taken—but if I did not, the respect I bear to his determination would certainly have prevented my opposing them. I must end this extraordinary visit [*aside.*]—Shall I have the honour of conducting your Ladyship to the Company?

Lady D. N - - o, Sir—I have some orders to give my Woman, I'll rejoin the Ladies in a few minutes.

Geo. Then I'll wish your Ladyship a good morning.

[*Exit.*
Lady

Lady D. Amazement! why, what a visit from a Lover!——Is this the language in which men usually talk to women, with whom they are on the point of marriage?——Respect! Veneration! Obedience to my Father!—And shall I have the honour of conducting your Ladyship to the Company?—A pretty Lover-like request truly!——But this coldness to me proceeds from a cause I now understand——This morning, what fire was there in his eyes! what animation in his countenance! whenever he address'd himself to that creature Mr. Drummond brought here?—Would his request to her have been to conduct her to Company?—No, no;—But I must be cautious——I must be patient now—but you will find, Sir, when I possess the privileges of a Wife, I shall not so easily give them up—your fiery glances, if not directed to me, shall at least, in my presence, be addressed to no other. *[Exit.*

SCENE changes to an Apartment.

BELLA at her Harpsichord.

S O N G.

Haste, haste, ye fiery Steeds of Day,

In Ocean's bosom hide your beams!

Mild Evening, in her pensive gray

More soft, and more alluring seems.

Yet

*Yet why invoke the pensive Eve,
Or, sighing, chide refulgent Morn?
Their shifting moments can't relieve
The heart by pangs of absence torn.*

Hang Music——it only makes me melancholy——Heigh-ho!——these Lovers infect me too, I believe——Seductive Italy! what are your attractions? Oh, for Fortunatus's cap! I'd convince myself in a moment if my doubts are justly founded——And suppose they should——what then?—Ah! they think I am made of ice, whilst the gaiety of my disposition only serves to conceal a heart as tenderly susceptible as the most serious of my sex can possess——

Enter EMILY.

Ah, my dear Ma'am, I am rejoiced to see you; I have been just long enough alone to be tired of myself, and to be charmed at so agreeable a relief.

Em. Can that ever be the case with Miss Sydney? I thought you had possess'd the happiest flow of spirits in the world.

Bel. Pho!—your great spirits are mere Jack-a-lanterns in the brain—they dance about, shine, and make vagaries—while those who possess happiness, *soberly* and quietly enjoy their treasure.

Em.

Em. Indeed! I hope *dulness* is not your criterion of happiness—if it is, there are few assemblies where you'll not find a great number to envy.

Bel. Oh, no—Dulness is the character of those who are too wise, not too happy.

Enter GEORGE.

Geo. Two Ladies in council——on fashion, or news?

Bel. On a better subject—laughing at the slaves we have made, and forging chains for more.

Geo. That's not the business of fine Women——Nature meant to save them the trouble of plotting——for traps and chains, she bestowed sparkling eyes, and timid blushes, with a whole multitude of graces, that hang about the form, and wanton in the air. [*Looking at EMILY.*]

Bel. Well, after all, Men are delightful creatures—flattery, cards, and scandal, help one thro' the day tolerably well—I don't know how we should exist without 'em in the country.

Geo. And which of 'em would you relinquish in town?

Bel. Not flattery, because it keeps one in spirits, and gives a glow to the complexion——Scandal, you may take away——but leave cards, to keep us awake,

with the fashionable world—on Sunday evenings.

Geo. And, in lieu of scandal, you'll accept of conquest.

Bel. Ridiculous! Conquest is not such an object with Women, as the Men imagine—for my part, I should conceive a net that would catch the hearts of the whole sex, a property of very little value.

Geo. But you would think it a very pleasant one, my gentle Cuz. or, at least [*archly*] you'd pick out one happy favourite before you gave the rest to despair.

Bel. Positively no———I don't know one that I should not let fly away with the rest.

Geo. Now, how can you fib, with such an unblushing face? This debate, Madam, [*to EMILY*] will let you into Bella's secret—she has, at this moment, an image in her heart, that gives a flat contradiction to her tongue.

Bel. Indeed!—you make your assertion with great effrontery———but now, to compliment your discernment, whose image do you think of?

Geo. Ha, Bella———listen with your greediest ears to catch the transporting sound—breathe not, ye softest Zephyrs! be silent, ye harmonious Spheres! while I articulate the name of——

Bel.

Bel. [*Stopping her ears*] Oh, I won't hear it.

Geo. Beauchamp!

Bel. Oh, frightful!—don't attend to him—George's belief is always under the influence of his fancy.

Em. In this instance, if I may judge from your looks, he has not hinted at a fiction.

Bel. Indeed you are mistaken; his guess might have been as good, if he had named Prester John.

Geo. Hum—I wish it may be so, for I have heard a story about a certain Lady on the Continent, whom a certain Gentleman——

Bel. Thinks handsomer than Bella Sydney—mortifying—ha, ha, ha!

Geo. Nay more, to whom he devotes his hours.

Bel. His heart [*petulantly.*]

Geo. On whom he doats.

Bel. Psha!

Geo. Grows melancholy.

Bel. Nonsense!

Geo. Nay, fights for her.

Bel. Ridiculous!

Geo. Lives only at her feet.

Bel. You are really very insupportable, Sir—do find some other subject to amuse yourself.

Geo. Ha, ha, ha! the Gudgeon has bit——See, Madam, a Coquette struggling

with the consciousness of love,—are not those pouts, and angry blushes, proofs of Beauchamp's happiness?

Em. I cannot perceive these proofs—Mr. Beauchamp, perhaps, is not in so enviable a state.

Bel. Oh, you are a good girl, and I assure you perfectly right—Lovers, thank our stars! are too plenty, for an absent one to give us much pain.—What, turn your arms on your associate, George!—I'll break the league, and discover all.

[*Apart to* GEORGE.

Geo. You dare not, you love mischief too well—it is as dear to you as the sighs of your Lover.

Bel. A-propos! where's Sir Charles?

Geo. In the garden probably—fishing to the winds—and I wish you'd find him—and leave us. [*Apart.*

Bel. Ha! Perhaps they'll waft his sighs to Harriet—and she must not hear 'em yet—and so, Sir Charles— [*Exit.*

Em. Oh, pray make me one of your party. [*Going.*

Geo. Stay, Madam, I intreat you—believe me, they will not thank you—I'll tell you the story.

Em. I'll hear it from Miss Sydney.

Geo. Nay, if you are determined—— [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

S C E N E, *the Garden.**Enter* HARRIET.

In vain do I endeavour to conceal it from myself—This spot has charms for me, that I can find in no other——here have I seen—perhaps for the last time, Sir Charles Seymour. My Cousin's presence was unlucky—I should have heard him—but it would have been a crime in him to have talked to me of love—an insult that I must have resented——and yet 'tis the only subject on which I could wish to have heard him. Bless me! he's here again—he haunts this place—but he does not observe me, and I'll conceal myself; for I feel I could not now behave with proper reserve. *[Goes behind an arbor.*

Enter Sir CHARLES, *looking round.*

Sweet *resemblance* of her I love! come from thy hiding-place. *[Takes a picture from his bosom, and kisses it.]* In her absence thou art the dearest object to my eyes. What a face is this!

“'Tis beauty truly blest, whose red and
white

“Nature's own sweet and cunning hand
laid on.”

Enter GEORGE. Seizes his arm.

Geo. Ho, ho!—so the Picture's come home from the Painter's, is it, Sir—and the drapery quite to your mind?

Sir Ch. [*Confused and recovering.*] The artifice I used to obtain it, those who love can pardon.

Geo. And how many times a day dost thou break the decalogue in worshipping that Image?

Sir Ch. Every hour that I live. I gaze on it till I think it looks, and speaks to me; it lies all night on my heart, and is the first object I address in the morning.

Geo. Oh, complete your character, and turn Monk—'tis plain you're half a Papist.

Sir Ch. Why condemn me to cells and penitence?

Geo. That you mayn't violate the laws of Nature, by pretending to a character for which she never designed you. Your bonds, instead of silken fetters, appear to be hempen cords. Come, confess, have not you been examining on which of these trees you would be most gracefully pendent?

Sir Ch. That *gaieté de cœur*, George, bears no mark of the tender passion; and, to be plain, I believe you know very little about it.

Geo. You are confoundedly mistaken—we are both Lovers, but the difference
between

between us lies thus: Cupid to me is a little familiar rogue, with an arch leer—and cheeks dimpled with continual smiles—To you—an awful Deity, deck'd out in his whole regalia of darts, flames, quiver, and so forth—I play with him—you——

Sir Ch. Spare yourself the trouble of so long an explanation—All you would say is, that you love with hope—I with despair.

Geo. Very concise, and most pathetically exprest——melancholy suits your features, Charles—'twere pity your Mistress should encourage you; it would deprive you of that *something* in your air which is so touching—Ha! ha! ha!—poor Seymour! Come, let us go in search of the girls, they are gone to the wood; who knows but you may find a nymph there, who'll have the kindness to put hanging and drowning out of your head?

Sir Ch. *Oh, would sweet Celia meet me there,
With soften'd looks, and gentler air,
Transported, to the Wood I'd fly,
The happiest Swain beneath the sky;
Sighs and complaints I'd give the
wind,*

And IO's sing, were Celia kind.

[*As he repeats the verses, GEORGE, laughing, scans them on his fingers.*

[*Exit Sir CHARLES.*

E 4

Geo.

Geo. Cupid is deaf, as well as blind. [Exit GEORGE.

Enter HARRIET.

Har. Her picture in his bosom, and kiss it with such rapture too! Well—I am glad I am convinced—I am perfectly at ease. He loves then without hope, and George was mistaken in supposing him so near marriage—but he loves notwithstanding—her picture lies all night on his heart, and her idea is never absent from his mind—Well, be it so—I am perfectly at ease, and shall no longer find a difficulty in assuming an indifference that is become real—Oh, Seymour! [Exit.

S C E N E , *the Wood.*

Enter Lady DINAH.

Insolent wretch!—Nothing less than the conviction of my own senses could have induced me to believe so shocking an indecorum—I saw her myself look at him with eyes that were downright gloting—I saw him snatch her hand, and press it to his lips, with an ardour that is inconceivable—and when the creature pretended to blush, and made a reluctant effort to withdraw it—*my* Youth, so full of veneration and respect for me, refused to resign it—till the harlot had
given

given him a gracious smile of reconciliation——Heavens! they are coming this way——sure they do not perceive me——See there!——Nay, if you will come here.
[*Goes behind a shrub.*]

Enter EMILY, followed by GEORGE.

Em. I entreat you, Sir, not to persist in following me——You'll force me to appeal to Mr. Drummond for protection.

Geo. You need no protection, Madam, that you will not find in my respect——But you are barbarous to deprive me of conversing with you——'tis a felicity, I have so lately tasted, that 'tis no wonder I am greedy of it.

Em. If you believe your attentions would not displease me in my proper character——I ought to be offended that you address them to a person, of whose name and family you are ignorant.

Geo. Can a name deprive you of that face, that air——or rob you of your mind——of what then am I ignorant?——'tis these I address with the most passionate vows of——

Em. I positively will not listen to you——However, if the acquaintance should place us on a footing, I'll then converse with you——if on my own terms.

[*Lady D. listening—Aye, or on any terms.*]

I have

I have no dislike to the charming freedom of the English manners—you shall be as gallant as you please; but I give you notice, the instant you become dangerous, I shall be grave.

Geo. How dangerous——

Em. Oh, the moment you grow of consequence enough to endanger my heart, I shall shut myself from you—but as long as you continue harmless, you may play.

Geo. This is not to be borne—I will not be harmless——I declare open war against your heart, not in play, but downright earnest.

Em. Nay, then, I must collect my forces to oppose you—my heart will stand a long siege, depend on it.

Geo. If you'll promise it shall yield at last, a ten years siege will be richly rewarded.

Em. Oh, no; I make no promises—try your forces; if you should possess yourself of it in spite of me—I can only bewail its captivity.

Geo. Your permission to take the field is all I can at present hope; and thus on my knees, dear charming Creature——

Lady D. [*Listening.*] There's veneration and respect!

Em. Hold, Sir—I will be so generous to tell you, that whenever you kneel I shall fly. [*Runs out.*]

Geo.

Geo. And I'll pursue—till my Atalanta confesses I have won the prize. [*As GEO. is following EMILY, Lady D. comes out against him with an angry reproachful air, and passes him.*]

Geo. [*Aside.*] So,—there's a look! what a blessed Mother-in-law I shall have!

[*Exit.*]

Lady D. What!—not stay even to explain—to apologise—follow her before my face—oh, Monsters, Furies! yes, yes, she'll yield without the trouble of a ten years siege—she can scarcely hold out ten minutes—oh, ye shall both suffer for this—I will go this instant—I will do something.

[*Exit.*]

Enter SUSAN.

Sus. Hah, my good Lady, is it so? ha, ha, ha! What old woman on earth could bear to see the ardors of a fine young fellow to an handsome girl—a young fellow whom she looks on as her own too—without being mad? I must see if I can't make myself useful here. A Lady, who like my mistress gives way to her most unbridled passions, is the only one worth being served by a girl of spirit and intrigue. I'll follow, and aid your Ladyship with my counsel before you have time to cool—[*going, returns.*—] So—'tis needless, here she ebbs, like a stormy sea.

Enter

Enter Lady DINAH.

Lady D. A moment's reflection has convinced me I should be wrong—he must not suspect that I influence his Father against the minion—nor will I allow her the satisfaction of thinking she gives to me the pangs of jealousy—but I will not lose him—something must be done.

Sus. Oh, my Lady, I was witness to the whole affair—a base man! I could have trampled him under my feet.

Lady D. Base, indeed! but 'tis on *her* my resentment chiefly falls—oh, Susan—revenge!

Sus. I am sure my heart aches for you, my Lady—there's nothing I would not do—Oh, she's an artful slut.

Lady D. She's as dangerous as artful—I must be rid of her, yet I know not how.—Oh France! for thy Bastily, for thy *Lettres de Cachet*!

Sus. There are ways and means here, my Lady—Miss told a fine tale to get into the house, and I fancy I can tell as fine a tale to get her out of it, and I should think it neither sin nor shame in the service of so good a Lady.

Lady D. If thou canst contrive any method—I care not what—any plan to rid me of her; command my fortune.

Sus. Oh, dear my Lady, as to that—as to your fortune, my Lady, that's out
of

of the question—but I know your Ladyship's generosity—I think I could send her packing,—perhaps before night.

Lady D. Can you!—The instant she goes, I'll give you two hundred pounds.

Sus. [*Courtesying*] She shall go, my Lady, if I have invention, or Jarvis a tongue.

Lady D. Jarvis! are you mad?—I wou'd not have him suspect that I am concerned in the affair, for the universe.

Sus. Oh, dear my Lady—I vow I wou'd not mention your name to him—no, not for another two hundred pounds;—no, no, Miss shall be got rid of, without giving Jarvis, or any one, the least reason to suspect that your Ladyship is privy to the matter.

Lady D. I am convinced she is an impostor, and I wonder Mr. Hargrave doesn't see it—but there will be more labour in rousing his stupid apprehension, than in explaining to an enthusiast the conceptions of a Bolingbroke.

Sus. I am more afraid of Mr. Drummond than him.

Lady D. Aye, he will support that Girl's interest, in order to mortify me—

Sus. That doesn't signify, my Lady—I have a card as good as any he holds to play against him: your Ladyship must have seen that the old Justice has full as much

much weight with the 'Squire, as Mr. Drummond.

Lady D. I observe that Mr. Hargrave is continually wavering between them—they influence his actions like two principal senses—Mr. Drummond is the friend of his understanding, the other of his humour. But what is the card you mean to play?

Sus. I mean to play one of his senses against the other, my Lady, that's all—for I am mistaken if I can't govern the Justice, as much as his whole five put together.

Lady D. That is indeed a card—my hopes catch life at it—Susan, say to him what you will, promise what you will—I suppose you have the way to the old fool's heart, and know by what road to reach it—at all events the Girl must be got rid of; the method I leave to you.—There's the dinner bell—I must walk a little to recover my composure, and then, I suppose, I may have the honour of sitting for the young Lady's foil. [Exit.

Sus. I am sure she can't have a better—ha, ha, ha!—Two hundred pounds! Oh the charms of jealousy and revenge—I might have served one of your good sort of orderly old women, 'till I had been grey—these two hundreds will quicken Mr. Jarvis a little; we shall see him more
atten-

attentive, I fancy, than he has been; and then farewell to servitude——Hah, Jarvis!

Enter JARVIS, bowing affectedly.

Jar. So look'd the Goddess of the Paphian
Isle,
When Mars she saw, and conquer'd
with that smile.

My dear Goddess, I kiss your fingers—I have been hunting for you in every walk in the garden.

Sus. [*Tenderly.*] Why—what did you want with me, Jarvis?

Jar. Why, faith, I have the same kind of necessity for you, that a Beau has for a looking-glass—you admire me, and keep me in good humour with myself.

Sus. Oh, if you want to be put in temper, I've got an excellent cordial. Now for your parts—now to prove yourself the clever fellow that you think you are.

Jar. That you think, my dear, you mean—but what extraordinary occasion has occur'd now, for the exhibition of my parts?

Sus. Listen!——We have discovered that the young 'Squire thinks eighteen a prettier age than fifty—that he prefers natural roses to Warren's, and that gravity and wisdom are no match for the fire
of

of two hazel eyes, assisted by the reasoning of smiles and dimples.

Far. And he's in the right on't—didn't I tell you this morning they reckon'd without their host?

Sus. Here has he been on his knees at the feet of the Damsel, and her Ladyship behind that bush, amusing herself with his transports—ha, ha, ha!

Far. Ha, ha, ha!—I warrant her, 'tis the only transports *she'll* ever see him in. George Hargrave marry our old Lady! no, no—I have a very good opinion of that young fellow; he's exactly what I should be, if I was heir to his Father's acres—just such a spirited, careless deportment—a certain prevailing assurance—upon my soul, Susan, you and I ought to have moved in a higher sphere.

Sus. Come, come, you must consider this affair in another light; 'twou'd be a shame, that because this Girl has a pretty face, and was found weeping by a compassionate old Gentleman—it wou'd be a shame, I say, that for these reasons, she shou'd marry into a great Family, and cheat the Sister of a Peer, of a Husband—Read the story *this way*, act with spirit, and our Lady will, *on the day of our marriage*, give us two hundred pounds.

Far. Humph!—on the day of our marriage——cannot you, Child, prevail on
your

your Lady to give me the two hundred, without tacking that condition to it?

Suf. Pho, Sauce-box!——Well, but these two hundreds now—what will you do for 'em?

Far. Do for 'em—Oh, any thing—the most extravagant thing in the world—run off with the girl—blow up the house—turn Turk—or marry you.

Suf. Upon my word, Sir?

Far. Well, but the business, Child, the business.

Suf. The business is, that we must contrive to open some door for this Girl to walk out of the house.

Far. But how—upon what ground—when, and where?

Suf. Why, if we could contrive the business, I have no doubt of the spirit and fire of your execution.——Do you remember the occupation which once gave employment to these talents of yours—I mean that of an itinerant Player?

Far. Oh, yes—I remember the barns that I have made echo with the ravings of Orestes, and the stables in which I have sighed forth the woes of Romeo.

Suf. Well, but have you any recollection of a pretty Juliet—a tall elegant Girl—in short, do you not remember

one of the strolling party exceedingly like the strange guest now in the house?

Far. Hum!——Why, what devil sent thee to tempt me this morning?—so I am to sell my honour—my honesty—

Sus. Pho, pho—honesty and honour are sentiments for people whose fortunes are made—let us once be independent, and we'll be as honourable and as honest as the best of 'em—so let's go in, and settle our plan.

Far. Well—'tis the fate of great men to be in the hands of Women; and therefore, my sweet Abigail—I am yours.

[*Leads her off.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT

A C T I V.

S C E N E, *an Apartment.*

Enter HARRIET, *followed by* BELLA.

Bella. **N**AY, but hear him—hear him, Harriet.

Har. Can this be you, Bella, who this morning seem'd fearful that I should not treat him with sufficient scorn——now persuading me to allow a private interview to a Man—who is professedly the lover of another?

Bel. How apprehensive you *very* delicate Ladies are! Why must you suppose he wants to talk to you about love—or on any topic, that his approaching marriage would make improper?

Har. Why—what *can* he have to say to me?

Bel. Admit him, and he'll tell you—perhaps he wants to consult your taste about the trimmings of his wedding clothes——or to beg your choice in his ruffles—or—

Har. Pho!—this is downright ridicule.

Bel. Well then—you won't admit him? [*seeming to go*] I shall tell him you don't choose to see him, tho' he is going to

leave us directly——but I approve your caution, Harriet, you are perfectly right.

Har. Going to leave us directly, Bella!

Bel. Immediately, my dear——I heard him order his chaise, and mutter something about insupportable—but I think you'll be exceedingly imprudent in receiving his visit, and advise you by all means to refuse it.

Har. Dear Bella!

Bel. Well then you will see him——I shall acquaint him with the success of my embassy—but remember scorn, Harriet, scorn. [Exit BELLA.

Har. Now, what am I to expect? my heart beats strangely—but remember, foolish Girl, the picture of his Mistress is in his bosom.

Enter Sir CHARLES.

Sir Ch. The request I ventured to make by Miss Sidney, Madam, must appear strange to you—the engagements which I——

Har. Renders it an extraordinary request indeed, Sir.

Sir Ch. I fear'd you would think so, and conscious of those engagements, I shou'd not have presum'd to have made it—but as it's probably the last time I may ever see you—I seize it, to tell you that—I adore you.

Har.

Har. Sir Charles! I am astonished,—
in my Father's house at least, I should
have been secure from such an insult.

Sir Ch. Forgive me, I intreat you.
Nothing could have forced this declara-
tion from me, but my despair.

Har. The engagement you talk of, Sir,
ought to have prevented *these* effects of
your despair.

Sir Ch. I acknowledge it—and they
have kept me silent ever since I arrived—
but when I thought of leaving you in a
few moments, I found the idea insup-
portable.

Har. The picture you wear, Sir Char-
les—might console you surely.

Sir Ch. Hah—I thought you were igno-
rant, Madam, of my possessing it.

Har. Without doubt you did, Sir Char-
les—but no, Sir—I am acquainted with
your wearing that Picture—and wonder
how you could presume—but I deserve
the insult, for listening to you a moment.

[*Going.*

Sir Ch. Oh, stay, Miss Hargrave, I
intreat you,—I will give up the picture,
since it so offends you—yet how can I
part from it?

Har. Oh, keep it, Sir——keep it by
all means——you mistake me entirely,
Sir; I have no right to claim such a sa-
crifice.

[*Going.*

Sir

Sir Ch. You have a right, Madam—here it is——[*kissing and offering it*] but do not rob me of it.

Har. Rob you of it!—in short, Sir Charles, you redouble your rudeness every moment—

Sir Ch. I did not think you would have so repented it——but I resign it to you, Madam—nay, you must take it.

Har. I take it, Sir! [*Glances her eye on it, then takes it with an air of doubt*]——My Picture!——astonishing!

Enter GEORGE and BELLA, both laughing.

Sir Ch. Your picture, Madam!

Geo. Look at the simpletons—ha, ha, ha!

Bel. What a fine attitude!—do it again, Sir Charles—ha, ha, ha!—Well, Harriet—how do you like Sir Charles's Mistress? Is she as handsome as George represented her?

Geo. Hold, hold! 'tis time now to have mercy. My dear Harriet, allow me to present to you my most valued friend, as the Man whom I shou'd rejoice to see your Husband. To you, my Seymour, I present a Sister, whose heart has no engagements that I am acquainted with, to supersede your claim.

Sir Ch. I am speechless with joy, and with amazement.

Geo.

Geo. Forgive the embarrassment I have occasion'd you—you have suffer'd something; but your felicity will be heighten'd from the comparifon. My dear Harriet, Seymour has always loved you—the picture which fo offended you is a proof, you cannot doubt.

Sir Ch. And that you were fo offended, is fupreme felicity—ftupid wretch—not to perceive my blifs!

Har. [To *Geo.* and *Bel.*] You have taken a liberty with me that I cannot pardon.

Geo. Nay, but you fhall pardon it—and as a proof, give him back your picture this minute.

Sir Ch. Return it to me, Madam, I intreat you [*kneeling*] I will receive it as the moft precious gift.

Bel. Come, give the poor thing its bauble.

Har. Well, take it, Sir—fince you had no fhare in this brilliant contrivance.

Sir Ch. [*Taking the picture*] Eternal bleffings on that hand!

Har. You, George, are never fo happy, as in exercifing your wit, at my expence.

Geo. And you, Harriet, never fo heartily forgave me in your Life, and therefore——

Sir Ch. Hold, George—I cannot bear Mifs Hargrave's fuffering in this manner; I

will take on myself the transporting office of defending her—this hour, Madam, I shall for ever remember with gratitude, and will endeavour to deserve it, by a life devoted to your happiness.

Bel. Come, Harriet—I must take you away, that Sir Charles may bring down his raptures to the standard of common mortals—at present, I see hi's in the clouds.

Har. 'Tis merciful to relieve me.

[*Exeunt* HARRIET and BELLA.]

Sir Ch. Charming Miss Sydney!—I'll never quarrel with your vivacity again. —But why have I been made too suffer thus?

Geo. Because you did not tell me *why* you wanted my Sister's picture—but I have taken a friendly vengeance; my plot has told you more of my Sister's heart in a few hours, than all your sighs and humility wou'd have obtained in as many months.

Sir Ch. For which I thank you—and my present happiness receives a brighter glow from this illusion of misery—I'll fly and pour out my joy and gratitude, at the feet of my charming Harriet.

[*Going.* Enter BELLA.]

Bel. Oh, stay, stay—we may want your assistance. Here's your Father coming, George. Your repartee to Lady Dinah at dinner,

dinner, spoilt her digestion—and she's been representing you—that's all.

Geo. I hope she represented her sneer too, which suffused with tears the loveliest eyes in the world. Could I do less than support her against the ill-humour of that antiquated pedant?—By Jupiter, I'll draw her in colours to my Father, that shall make him shrink from the fate he is preparing for himself.

Enter Mr. HARGRAVE.

Mr. H. Why, George, how's this?—Dy'e know what you've done?—you've affronted Lady Dinah.

Geo. I did not design to affront her, Sir—I only meant to convince her that she shou'd not insult the amiable young Lady, whom Mr. Drummond placed under your protection.

Mr. H. Don't tell me—amiable young Lady! How do you know what she is?—on the footing you are with Lady Dinah, let me tell you, if she had insulted an hundred young Ladies, you ought not to have seen it—at least, not resented it.

Geo. Pardon me, Sir—I did not conceive that Lady Dinah shou'd have assumed in your house—at least till she becomes your Wife—a right to——

Mr. H. What's that you say, Sir?

Geo.

Geo. Indeed, Sir, to confess the truth, I am astonish'd at your partiality for that Lady—she is the last woman in the world, whom I could wish to see in the place of my amiable Mother.

Mr. H. Your Mother!

Geo. I shou'd think it a breach of my duty, to see you plunge yourself into so irretrievable a fate, without acquainting you with my sentiments—if you saw her in the light I do, Sir—you would think on your wedding day with horror.

Mr. H. Why—why—are you mad?

Geo. If you wished to keep your engagements a secret, Sir—I am sorry I mention'd the affair, but—

Bel. Oh—'tis no secret, Sir, I assure you—every body talks of it—for my part, I shall be quite happy in paying my respects to my new Aunt—I have put a coral string in my tambour already, that I may finish it time enough for her first Boy to wear at its christening.

Mr. H. Look ye, Sir—I perceive that you have all that backwardness in obeying me that I expected, and, in order to conceal it, are attempting to throw the affair into ridicule—but I tell you it will not do—I know what I am about, and my commands shall not be disputed.

Geo. Commands, Sir!—I am quite at a loss—

Mr.

Mr. H. Well then, to prevent further mistakes, I acquaint you, that I design *Lady Dinah* for your *Wife*, and not your Mother—and moreover, that the marriage shall take place in a very few days. [*Going.*]——And, d'ye hear?—acquaint your pert Cousin, that the coral string will do for *your* first Boy. [*Exit HARGRAVE.*

[*A long pause, staring at each other.*

Bel. So, so, so! and is this the end of all the closetings?

Sir Ch. What the devil!—it must be all a dream.

Geo. Wife!—*Lady Dinah my Wife!*

Bel. Ha, ha, ha! dear George, forgive me, but I must laugh, or I can't exist—ha, ha, ha! oh, my Cousin Dinah!

Geo. Pray, Bella, spare your mirth, and tell me what I am to do—for I am incapable of thinking.

Bel. Do! why run to *Lady Dinah*—fling yourself at her feet, tell her you had no idea of the blifs that was designed you—and that you'll make her the tenderest, fondest Husband in the world—ha, ha, ha!

Geo. Oh, Cousin, for once forget your sprightliness—I cannot bear it—Seymour, what am I to do?

Sir Ch. My dear George, I pity you from my soul—but I know not what advice to give you.

Bel.

Bel. Well, then seriously I think—ha, ha, ha! but 'tis impossible to be serious—I am astonish'd you are not more struck with your Father's tender cares for you.

Geo. Have you no mercy, Bella?

Bel. You have none upon yourself, or instead of standing here with that countenance *si triste*, you wou'd be with Mr. Drummond.

Geo. He is, indeed, my only resource—I'll fly to him this instant, and if it fails me—I am the most miserable man on earth. [Exit.

Sir Ch. What can induce Mr. Hargrave to sacrifice such a fellow as George, to a Lady Dinah?—Preposterous!

Bel. Her rank and fortune—and I dread the lengths to which his obstinacy may carry him; he has no more respect for the divinity of Love, than for that of the Ægyptian Apis—Let us find Harriet, and tell her the strange story; she is not the only person, I fear, to whom it will be painful.

Sir Ch. Is it possible that Lady Dinah, in the depth of her wisdom, can imagine such an union proper?

Bel. Be merciful—Love has forc'd Heroes to forget their valour, and Philosophers their systems—no wonder he shou'd make a Woman forget her wrinkles.

[Exeunt.

SCENE,

S C E N E, *the Garden.*

Enter JARVIS and SUSAN.

Jar. Egad, 'tis a service of danger.

Sus. Danger! sure you've no qualms?

Jar. No, no, child—no qualms—the resolution with which I could go thro' an affair of this sort, would in another hemisphere make my fortune—but hang it, in these cold northern regions there's no room for a man of genius to strike a bold stroke—the fostering plains of Asia, for such talents as mine!

Sus. Now I think England's a very pretty foil.

Jar. Why, aye, if one could be sure of keeping clear of a dozen ill-bred fellows, who decide on the conduct of a man of spirit at the Old Bailey, then indeed we need not care; for an air of Ton, and a carriage, on whatever *springs* it moves, introduces one to the best circles——But let us consider our bottom——this girl was plac'd under the care of the old gentlewoman, by a person of credit.

Sus. Pho, pho, what! she brought a *recommendation*——don't we know how easily a character is to be had—spotless as silver, or as bright as gold! 'tis a wonder she did not afford a name too; I warrant she had sufficient reasons to conceal her own.

Jar.

Far. It does look like it, and there's a mystery in the affair——Now, mysteries, *as my Lady says*, we have a right to explain as we please.

Sus. Aye, to be sure—and this is the explanation. She is an unprotected, artful girl, who having caught a taste for the life of a fine Lady, thinks the shortest way to gratify her longing, is by gaining the heart of some credulous fool, who'll make her his wife for the sake of her—Beauty.

Far. True——That with this view she told her story to Mr. Drummond, who—innocent soul—not seeing her drift, introduced her here, where she attempts to succeed, by playing off her artillery on the gunpowder constitution of George Hargrave, Esq; the younger.

Sus. Oh, delightful!——why, if I continue with my Lady, I shall be her mistress as long as she lives——and now I think on't, I believe that must be our plan——You and I can be married just the same, you know.

Far. Oh, just the same, my dear, just the same; nothing shall prevent that—*[aside]* but my being able to coax you out of the Two Hundred.

Sus. Hark! here comes the Justice—slip away, and leave me to manage him—I know I can make him useful——You need not be jealous now.

Far.

Jar. Jealous! no, no; I have liv'd among the great too long, to be tormented with so vulgar a passion.

[*Exit* JARVIS.]

Enter JUSTICE.

Jus. Hah, hah! have I caught you, my little Picksey? Come, no struggling—I will have a kifs, by Jingo.

Sus. Lud! you are the strangest Gentleman—[*resisting.*]

Jus. You are wondrous coy, methinks.

Sus. Coy—so I should—What have Gentlewomen without fortune, to commend 'em else?

Jus. Aye—but that rosy, pouting mouth tells different tales, I warrant, to the fine Gentlemen in London. I have been thinking you'd make a pretty little Housekeeper—yes you would, Hussy—yes you would—will you come and live with me?

Sus. Oh, dear Sir—I should like it vastly; but I think you had better go to London with me—I assure you, my Lady speaks very highly of your talents in the law—and she has great interest—so, as soon as she is Lady Dinah Hargrave—Your Worship is acquainted with that affair, I suppose.

Jus. Yes, yes; my friend has told me of it—but under strict injunctions of secrecy.

Sus.

Sus. Secrecy! aye, to be sure—but I dare say Mr. Drummond has been informed of it.

Fus. Oh, I know nothing of *him*—he's queer and close; one can never get him in at a bout—he's not staunch.

Sus. I believe he is not staunch to our match; and if that is prevented, we shall leave the country directly.

Fus. Why, what can prevent it, Sweetie?

Sus. Perhaps Mr. Drummond's advice; for *he* can manage Mr. Hargrave.

Fus. Ah—but my advice will go as far as his, I believe; and do you think I'll part with you—you little wicked rogue you? [*chucking her chin.*]

Sus. Then if you find the match is likely to go off, you must use all your interest to bring it to bear; and then we sha'n't part, you little wicked rogue you. [*Chucking his chin.*]

Fus. That I will—I'll plead for the wedding as vigorously, as if I had an hundred guineas with a brief.

Sus. Well—but d'ye mind me? I don't like the stranger this same 'Squire usher'd here.

Fus. Not like her! why, she's a devilish fine girl;—adad, the warm sparkling of her eyes catches one's heart, as if it was made of tinder.

Sus.

Sus. Upon my word—a devilish fine Girl—the sparkling of her eyes!——

Jus. Oh—I don't mean—that is—Oh, I would rather have one kind look of thine, sweet Mrs. Sukey—for t'other I dare not squint at.

Sus. Hah!—I believe you are a Coquet—but however, I have certain reasons to wish this beautiful Angel out of the house. I have observed looks that I don't like, between her and young Hargrave—and—you comprehend me——whatever interrupts the marriage, we are gone.

Jus. I understand you—you may depend upon me—let me see—how shall we manage to get her out of Drummond's clutches?

Sus. That's your business—I say, that must be done, and you must do it.

Jus. To be sure, Mrs. Susan—let me consider——

Sus. We must have no qualms, Mr. Justice.

Jus. We will have none——but what your smiles, sweet Sukey, can disperse——I must venture a little—the tender passions make one do any thing. *Omnia vincit amor*, say no more.

Sus. She shall be sent packing.

Jus. Have I not given you the word of a Magistrate?——But come now, give me

one kiss, you little dear, cruel, soft, sweet, charming, baggage.

Sus. Oh, fye—you won't ask for wages, before you've done your work. [*Runs off.*

Fus. Stop—don't run so fast—don't run so fast, Huffy—[*following.*] [*Exit.*

S C E N E, *an Apartment.*

Enter Mr. DRUMMOND and GEORGE.

Mr. D. I wish I had known it before matters had been carried so far——on a subject of this nature no woman can be affronted with impunity.

Geo. I am careless of her resentment—I will never be her husband—nor husband to any woman, but *her* to whom I have given my vows.

Mr. D. Hah!—have you carried your affair so forward?

Geo. Yes, Sir, I have made that enchanting Girl the offer of my heart and hand, and tho' her delicacy forbids her, while our families remain unknown to each other, to give the assent my heart aspires to——yet she allows me to catch hopes, that I would not forfeit to become master of the universe.

Mr. D. There's a little of the ardor of youth in this——the ardor of youth, George—however, I will not blame you, for twenty years ago, I might have been
tempted

tempted to enter the lists with you, myself.

Geo. I shou'd fear less to meet a Hector in the field—in such a cause the fury of Achilles would inspire me—and I would bear off my lovely prize from amidst the embattled phalanx.

Mr. D. Bravo—I like to see a man romantic in his love, and in his friendships—the virtues of him who is not an enthusiast in those noble passions, will never have strength to rise into fortitude, patriotism, and philanthropy—but here comes your Father, leave us.

Geo. May the subject inspire you with resistless eloquence! [Exit.

Enter Mr. HARGRAVE.

Mr. D. So, Mr. Hargrave.

Mr. H. So, Mr. Drummond—what, I guess your business.

Mr. D. I suppose you do, and I hope you are prepared to hear me with temper.

Mr. H. You'll talk to no purpose, for I am fixed, and therefore the temper will signify nothing.

Mr. D. Strange infatuation! why must George be sacrificed to your ambition?—surely, it may be gratified without tying *him* to your Lady Dinah.

Mr. H. How?

Mr. D. By marrying her yourself—— which, till now, I supposed to have been your design—and that wou'd have been sufficiently preposterous.

Mr. H. What!——make me a second time the slave of hysterics, longings, and vapours!——no, no, I've got my neck out of the noose——catch it there again if you can—what, her Ladyship is not youthful enough for George, I suppose?

Mr. D. True—but a more forcible objection is the disproportion in their minds——it wou'd not be less reasonable to expect a new element to be produced between earth and fire, than that felicity shou'd be the result of such a marriage.

Mr. H. Psha, psha—what, do you suppose the whole world has the same idle notions about love and constancy, and stuff, that you have? D'ye think, if George was to become a widower at five and twenty, *he'd* whine all his life for the loss of his deary?

Mr. D. Not if his deary, as you call her, should be a Lady Dinah; and if you marry him with no other view than to procure him a happy widowhood, I admire the election you have made—but, if she shou'd be like my lost love—my sainted Harriet—my——oh! Hargrave——

Mr. H. Come, come, I am very sorry I have moved you so—I did not mean to affect

affect you——come, give me your hand——'sbud, if a man has any thing to do with one of you fellows with your fine feelings, he must be as cautious as if he was carrying a candle in a gunpowder barrel.

Mr. D. 'Tis over, my friend——but when I can hear my Harriet named, without giving my heart a fond regret for what I have lost——reproach me—for then, I shall deserve it.

Mr. H. Well, well—it shall be your own way—but come, let me convince you that you are wrong in this business——'sbud! I tell you it has been the study of my life to make George a great man—I brought Lady Dinah here with no other design—and now, when I thought the matter was brought to bear—when Lady Dinah had consented—and my Son, as I supposed, eager for the wedding——why!—'tis all a sham!

Mr. D. My good friend—the motives, from which you wou'd sacrifice your Son's happiness, appear to me so weak.

Mr. H. Weak!—why, I tell you, I have provided a wife for George, who will make him, perhaps, one of the first men in the kingdom.

Mr. D. That is, she would make him a Court Dangler, an attendant on Ministers levees——one whose ambition is

to be fostered with the cameleon food of smiles and nods, and who would receive a familiar squeeze with as much rapture as the plaudits of a nation——oh——shame—to transform an independent English Gentleman into such a being!

Mr. H. Well, to cut the argument short——the bargain is struck, and George shall marry Lady Dinah, or never have an acre of my land, that's all.

Mr. D. And he shall never possess a rood of mine, if he does. [*Walking about.*]

Mr. H. [*Aside*] There, I thought 'twou'd come to this: what a shame it is for a man to be so obstinate!—but hold—faith, if so, I may lose more than I get by the bargain—he'll stick to his word.

Enter JUSTICE.

Jus. I am very much surprized, Mr. Drummond—Sir——that I can't be left alone in the discharge of my magisterial duties, but must be continually thwarted by you.

Mr. D. This interruption, Mr. Justice, is ill-timed, and rather out of rule—I cou'd wish you had chosen another opportunity.

Jus. No opportunity like the present—no time like the present, Sir—you've cause, indeed, to be displeas'd with my
not

not observing rules, when you are continually breaking the laws.

Mr. D. Ha, ha, ha! let us hear—what hen-roost robbery have you to lay to my charge now?

Jus. Aye, Sir, you may think to turn it off with a joke, if you please—but for all that, I can prove you to be a bad member of society, for you counteract the wise designs of our legislators, and obstruct the operations of justice——yes, Sir, you do.

Mr. H. Don't be so warm——what is this affair?

Jus. Why, the poacher, whom we committed last night, Mr. Drummond has released, and given money to his family—How can we expect a due observance of our laws, when rascals find encouragement for breaking them?——Shall Lords and Commons in their wisdom assemble in Parlement, to make laws about hares and partridges, only to be laughed at? Oh, 'tis abominable!

Mr. H. Very true; and let me tell you, Mr. Drummond, it is very extraordinary that you will be continually——

Mr. D. Peace, ye men of justice——I have all the regard to the laws of my country, which it is the duty and interest of every member of society to possess——If the man had been a poacher, he

shou'd not have been protected by me——the poor fellow found the hare in his garden, which she had considerably injured.

Mr. H. Ho, ho—what, the rascal justifies himself! an unqualified man gives reasons for destroying a hare!—Zounds, if a gang of ruffians shou'd burn my house, wou'd you expect me to hear their reasons?

Jus. There can be no reasons—if he had found her in his house, in his bed-chamber—in his bed, and offer'd to touch her—I'd prosecute him for poaching.

Mr. D. Oh, blush to avow such principles!

Mr. H. Look'ee, Mr. Drummond, though you go vern George with your whimsical notions, you sha'n't me.—I foresee how it will be as soon as I'm gone—my fences will be cut down—my meadows turned into common—my corn-fields laid open—my woods at the mercy of every man who carries an axe—and, oh—this is noble, this is great!

Mr. D. Indeed, 'tis ridiculous.

Mr. H. I'll take care that my property sha'n't fall a sacrifice to such whimsies—I'll tye it up, I warrant me—and so, Justice, come along. [*Going.*]

Mr. D. We were talking on a subject, Mr. Hargrave, of more importance, at present,

present, than this; and, I beg you'll hear me farther.

Mr. H. Enough has been said already, Mr. Drummond,—or if not, I'll give you one answer for all—I shall never think myself obliged to study the humour of a man, who thinks in such opposition to me; I have a humour of my own, which I am determined to gratify, in seeing George a great man—He shall marry Lady Dinah in two days; and all the fine reasoning in the world, you will see, has less strength than my resolution—'Sbud, if I can't have the willing obedience of a Son, I'll enjoy the prerogatives of a father——Come along, Justice. [*Exit.*

Jus. D'ye hear with what a fine *firm* tone he speaks?—This was only a political stroke, to restore the balance of power.

Mr. D. Why don't you follow, Sir?

Jus. I will, I will——[*aside.*] There it works; Susan's my own. [*Exit JUSTICE.*

Mr. D. My Son shall be a great Man!——To such a vanity as this how many have been sacrificed!—He shall be great!——The happiness of love, the felicities that flow from a suitable union, his heart shall be a stranger to—but he shall convey *my name*, deck'd with titles, to posterity, though, to purchase these distinctions, he lives a wretch——This is the silent language of the heart, which we
hold

hold up to ourselves as the voice of Reason and Prudence.

Enter EMILY.

Miss Morley!—Why this pensive air?

Em. I am a little distress'd, Sir—the delicacy of the motive which induced you to place me here, I am perfectly sensible of—yet——

Mr. D. Yet—what, my dear Child?

Em. Do not think me capricious, if I intreat you to take me back to your own house, till my uncle arrives—I cannot think of remaining here.

Mr. D. Then 'tis as I hoped [*aside.*]—What can have disgusted you?—Come, be frank; consider me as a friend, to whom you may safely open your heart.

Em. Your goodness, Sir, is excessive—Shall I confess—the Lady who will soon have most right here, treats me unkindly.

Mr. D. That you can't wonder at——Be assured, I will effectually defend you from her insults——But do you not pity poor George, for the fate his father designs him?

Em. Yes—I do pity him.

Mr. D. If I dared, I would go still further—I would hope, that, as his happiness depends on you—

Em. Sir!

Mr.

Mr. D. Let me not alarm you—I am acquainted with his passion, and wish to know that 'tis not displeasing to you.

Em. So circumstanced, Sir—what can I say?—He is destined to be the husband of another.

Mr. D. It is enough—I bind myself to you from this moment, and promise to effect your happiness, if within the compass of my abilities or fortune. But, that I may know my task—favour me with the key to your Uncle's character.

Em. My Uncle possesses a heart, Sir, that would do him honour, if he would be guided by it—but unhappily he has conceived an opinion that his temper is too flexible—that he is too easily persuaded—and the consequence is—he'll never be persuaded at all.

Mr. D. I am sorry to hear that—a man who is obstinate from *such* a mistake, must be in the most incurable stage of the disorder. However, we'll attack this man of might—his flexibility shall be besieged, and if it won't capitulate, we'll undermine it.

Em. Ah, Sir! my Uncle is in a state of mind ill prepared for yielding—He returned from Spain with eager pleasure to his native country; but the disgust he has conceiv'd for the alteration of manners during his absence, has given him an im-
patience

patience that you will hardly be able to combat.

Mr. D. Take courage—let me now lead you back to your young companions—I am obliged to be absent a short time—but I'll watch over you, and, if possible, lead you to happiness.

[*Exit DRUMMOND leading EMILY.*

Enter JUSTICE. [Tipsy.]

Jus. Where the devil does my clerk stay with Burn! But I know I'm right—yes, yes, 'tis a clear case. By the statute *Anno Primo Caroli Secundum*—obtaining goods on false pretences, felony, with benefit—hum—with benefit.—Now obtaining entrance into houses, upon false pretences, must be worse—I have no doubt but it amounts to a burglary, and that I shall be authorized to commit—Ho! here they are! where is my clerk and Burn? [*Exit.*

Enter Mr. HARGRAVE and Lady DINAH.

Mr. H. Aye, aye, here's a pretty business—bringing this Girl into my house now is the consequence of Mr. Drummond's fine feelings—he will never take my advice—but I'll shew him who is best qualified to sift into an affair of this sort—and yet *I am* a little puzzled—a stroller—

Lady

Lady D. It is, doubtless, a strange story, Mr. Hargrave—and I beg that you will yourself question my servant concerning it.

Mr. H. Why, what can she mean—what can her design be?

Lady D. To you I shou'd imagine her design must be very obvious, 'though Mr. Drummond's penetration was so easily eluded——By assuming the airs and manners of a person of rank, she doubtless expects to impose on the credulity of some young heir, and to procure——a jaunt to Scotland——*that*, Mr. Hargrave, I take to be her design.

Mr. H. Hoh, ho, is it so——now I understand your Ladyship—if your man can prove what he asserts, be assured, Madam, she shall not stay in my house another moment—I'll young heir the baggage.

Lady D. But consider, dear Mr. Hargrave, before you take any steps in this affair——that 'tis possible, we may have been deceived, for tho' my servant avows having been on the most intimate terms with her, he may be mistaken in her person, you know.

Har. Oh, Madam, I shall inquire into that—she shall pick up no young heirs here, I warrant her—I shall see into that immediately.

[*Going.*
Enter

*Enter JUSTICE, leading in JARVIS
by the button.*

Jus. Here's the young man—the witness—I have brought him up in order to his examination.—Here,—do you stand there.—In the first place,—[*settling his wig*] in the first place, how old are you?

Har. Fiddle de de——What signifies how old he is?

Jus. Why, yes it does—for—if he is not of age——

Har. Psha, psha—I'll examine him myself. How long is it since you left the strollers you were engaged with?

Jar. It is about two years since I had the honour of being taken into my Lady's service,—and at that time I left the company.

Har. And did you leave the 'young woman in the company at that time?

Jar. I did, Sir, and I have never seen her since till now.

Har. I am strangely puzzled——I don't know what to think——

Jus. It is indeed a difficult case——a very difficult case——I remember Burn in the chapter on Vagrants——

Har. Prithee, be silent—at this time you are not likely to clear up matters at all.

Jus. A Justice be silent!—a silent Justice!—a pretty thing indeed—are we not the very mouth of the law?

Har.

Har. What does your Ladyship advise?

Lady D. I advise!—I don't advise, Mr. Hargrave.

Jus. Why then, let the parties be confronted—

Har. Aye——let the parties be confronted.

Jar. Ay, ay, let us be confronted: if I once speak to her, she'll be too much dash'd to be able to deny the charge.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Did your honour call?

Har. Go and tell my daughter, that I desire she'll bring her visitant here--the young Lady.

Jar. [*Aside*] Two glasses of brandy, and tremble yet!—I wish I had swallow'd the third bumper.

Lady D. Now, Mr. Hargrave, it will be exceedingly improper, that I should be present at this interview, so I shall retire till the affair is settled. [*Going.*

Mr. H. 'Sbud, my Lady, if you go, I'll go too—and the Justice may settle it as well as he can.

Jus. Nay, if you are for that—I shall be gone in a crack—I won't be left in the lurch—not I.

Lady D. Bless me! I am surpris'd—only consider what an imputation may be thrown on my character.

Enter

Enter HARRIET *and* EMILY.

So—now 'tis determin'd.

Har. Robert inform'd us, Sir, that you requested our attendance.

Mr. H. Yes, Harriet—I did send Robert—'tis about an odd affair—I had rather—but I don't know—pray, Madam—*[to EMILY]* be so kind to tell us if you know any thing of that person—*[pointing to JARVIS.]*

Em. No, Sir, I believe not—I do not recollect—I may have seen him before.

Jar. Oh, Miss Jenny—you don't recollect—what, you have forgot your old companion William Jarvis?

Em. I do not remember indeed, that I was ever honour'd with such a companion—and the mistake you have made of my name, convinces me that I never was.

Jar. Psha, psha—this won't do *now*—you was always a good actress, but behind the scenes, you know, we used to come down from our stilts, and talk in our own proper persons—Why sure, you will not pretend to forget our adventures at Colchester—the affair of the Blue Domino at Warwick——nor the plot which you and Mrs. Varnish laid against the Manager at Beconsfield.

Har. Dear Sir, nothing is so evident, as that the man has mistaken this Lady for another person—I—hope you'll permit us
to

to go without hearing any more of his impertinence.

Mr. H. If he is mistaken, no excuses will be sufficient—I don't know what to say——'tis a perplexing business—but I wish you wou'd be so kind to answer the man, Madam.

Em. Astonishment has kept me silent till now, Sir—and I must still be silent——for I have not yet been taught to make *defences*.

Enter GEORGE behind JARVIS.

Jar. Dear Madam——why surely you have not forgot how often you have been my Juliet, and I your Alexander.

Geo. Hark you, Sir,——if you dare utter another word to that Lady, I'll break every bone in your body—leave the room, rascal, this instant.

Mr. H. You are too hot, George—he shall stay—and since things have gone so far, I'll sift the story to the bottom—If the young Gentlewoman is not what he represents her, she has nothing to fear—Speak boldly——where did you last see that Lady?

Jus. Aye, speak boldly——give her a few more circumstances, perhaps some of them may hit——People on occasions of this sort have generally short memories.

Geo. Surely, Sir, you cannot allow these horrid—

Mr. H. I do allow, Sir—and if you can't be silent, leave the room.

Jus. Yes, Sir, or else you'll be committed for contempt of Court. Now, for your name, child, your name, and that of your family.

Em. The name of my family, demanded on such an occasion, I think myself bound to conceal—my silence on that subject, hitherto arose from a point of delicacy—that motive is now greatly strengthened, and I refuse to discover a name—which my imprudent conduct has disgraced.

Jus. Ho, ho—pray let the Lady be treated with respect—a person of Consequence—stands upon Constitutional ground—a Patriot, I'll assure you—she refuses to answer Interrogatories.

Geo. Sir, I cannot be any longer a silent witness of these insults—Your presence, Madam, supports that rascal, or he shou'd feel the immediate effect of my resentment.

Lady D. Your resentment will be unnecessary, Sir, if he is not supported by truth—I shall take care that he is properly punish'd. [Enter SERVANT.

Sir. A Gentleman in a coach-and-six enquires for your honour—his name is Morley,

Em.

Em. Hah—'tis my Uncle—I no longer dread his presence—now, Sir, you will be satisfied concerning my family.

[*Exeunt EMILY and HARRIET.*

Mr. H. [*To Lady D.*] Her Uncle——Heavens! Madam, what have we done!

[*Exit HARGRAVE.*

Lady D. Done!—nothing—madness!

[*Aside.*

Jus. So, so——the niece of a man who keeps a coach and six!——we are got into a wrong box here—she can be no Patriot, our Patriots don't ride in coaches and six.

Geo. Stay, Sir——we have not done with you yet—you must now exhibit another part in this scene—what says your oracle Burn to such a fellow as this, Justice?

Jus. Ay, you rascal——'tis now your turn—thou art a vilifier, a cheat, an impostor——'tis a downright conspiracy—The niece of a man who keeps a coach and six!—why, how dost think to escape? thou'lt cut a noble figure in the pillory, Mr. "Alexander the Great."

Far. Sir,—your honours—I humbly crave pardon for my mistake—I cou'd have sworn the Lady had been my old acquaintance, the likeness is so strong.——But I humbly ask pardon——my Lady!——

Lady D. Expect no protection from me, I discharge you from my service from this moment.——The dilemma into which

you have deceived me excites my warmest resentment.

Geo. Since Your Ladyship gives him up, he has no other protection—Who's there? [*Enter SERVANTS*] Secure this fellow till I have leisure to inquire into the bottom of the affair—he is only the Agent, I am convinced.

Jar. [*Aside.*] Aye, Sir, but I am dumb—or we shall lose the reward. I beseech your honour—'twas all a mistake.

Geo. Take him away.

[*Exeunt servants with JARVIS.*]

Lady D. [*Aside.*] Hah—are you suspicious, Sir—I hope Susan has not put me in this fellow's power—I must be sure of that. [*Exit.*]

Jus. 'Tis a conspiracy, that's certain—and will, I believe, come under *Scan. Mag.*—but I'll go home and consult Burn, and you shall know what he says. Egad, it won't be amiss to get out of this Morley's way. [*Aside.*] [*Exit JUSTICE.*]

Geo. Surely she must have been privy to this scandalous plot—but 'tis no matter—my fate is at its crisis.—Mr. Morley's arrival fixes it.—At this moment my fortitude forsakes me, and I tremble to meet the Man, on whose caprice depends, the value of my existence.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE, *an Apartment.*

Enter Mr. MORLEY and EMILY.

Morley. **A** Pretty freak indeed!—a pretty freak, in return for the care and sollicitude with which I have watch'd over you——I have broke with the Doctor for his share in this romantic affair.

Em. I am much concerned, Sir, that compassion to my situation should have led that worthy Man to take any step that you can think unpardonable——but when he found he cou'd not move my resolution, he thought it his duty to accommodate me with a retreat amongst persons of reputation.

Mor. Retreat!——so, whilst I was condemning my sweet innocent Niece for stubbornness, wilfulness, and ingratitude——she was only gone to a *retreat* to sit under elms, listen to the cawing of rooks, and carve her melancholy story on the young bark——Oh, Emily, Emily! you ought to be made repent of this retreat, as you call it, as long as you live.

Em. Indeed, Sir, I do repent.

Mor. What's that?—repent!—my dear Emily, I am rejoiced to hear you say so——I knew you was always a good Girl, on the whole——come, it sha'n't be a misfortune to you——I'll make Baldwin swear, before the ceremony, that he'll never reproach——

Em. Sir, I must not deceive you——my repentance does not concern Mr. Baldwin—he is—pardon me, Sir——my sentiments with regard to him, are, if possible, strengthen'd.

Mor. Are they so, Mistress? then farewell to humourings——since your sentiments are so strong, your resolution cannot be weak——'twill enable you to bear this dreaded fate with heroism.

Em. I am glad you can be so sportive with my unhappiness, Sir——where you jest with misery, you always design to lessen it.

Mor. Aye, that won't do——the easiness of my temper, Girl, has been my great misfortune. I never made a mistake in trade in my life, never, but have been *persuaded*, and listen'd to *advice*, till I have been half ruined——but I'll be resolute now for your sake.

Em. Surely, Sir——

Mor. Aye, aye——I understand that speaking face—there is not a line in it, but calls me Monster—however, Madam,
after

after your retreat, you can never expect to be the wife of another—so snap Baldwin while you can.

Em. Oh, Sir, allow me to live single, I have no wish for the married state—since he to whom my heart is devoted must be the husband of another.

Mor. No wish for the married state! ha, ha, ha!—why, 'tis the ultimate wish of every woman's heart—you all want Husbands, from your doll to your spectacles.

Em. The person with whom one enters into so important an union shou'd be at least agreeable, or——

Mor. What an age this is!—Why, hussy, in the days of your great Grandmother, a Girl on the point of marriage had never dared to look above her lover's beard—and would have been a wife a week before she cou'd have told the colour of her husband's eyes—But, now, a Girl of eighteen will stare her suitor confidently in the face, and, after five minutes conversation, give an account of every feature and peculiarity, from his brow to his buckle—But pray, Madam, what is it in Baldwin now, that so particularly hits your fancy?

Em. His person is ungraceful, his manner assuming, and his mind effeminate.

Mor. Very true—and is not this the description of all the young men of the age?—but he has five thousand a year, that's not quite so common a circumstance. Come, take the pencil again, lay on coarser colours, or you won't convince me the picture's a bad one—considering the times.

Em. Hah!—how different is Mr. Hargrave!—if I could urge his merit [*aside*] ——— You have heard my objections so often, Sir, that the repetition can have no weight——but, surely, I may urge my happiness.

Mor. By all means, it shall be consider'd, therefore—John, order my carriage up, we are going directly—tho' you don't deserve it, the very moment we reach Grosvenor-street, you shall be tied fast to Baldwin, who is now waiting there with the parson at his elbow—and we'll this moment step into the carriage, and away as briskly, as if Cupid was our coachman——come now, don't put on that melancholy air—'tis only to turn the tables—fancy that I hate Baldwin—that you are driving to Scotland, and I pursuing you—why the horses will move so slowly, you'll be ready to swear they don't gallop above three rood an hour.

Em.

Em. I entreat you, dear Sir, stay, at least, till to-morrow.——Oh, where is Mr. Drummond? [Aside.

Mor. Not a moment.

Em. You have not yet seen Mr. Drummond, to whom I am so much oblig'd.

Mor. I have made enquiries, and have heard a very extraordinary character of Mr. Drummond; we can make him acknowledgments by letter—and you may send him gloves.——I know your design, you hope he will be able to talk me out of my resolution—and, perhaps, I may be a little afraid of it myself,—and so, to avoid that danger, we'll go directly.

Em. 'Tis so late, Sir,—and the night is dark.——[Aside] Yet why should I wish to stay here?

Mor. No more trifling—conduct me to the family, that we may take leave. If you complain of this as an act of tyranny—be comforted, Child, 'tis the last you'll experience from me—my authority will expire with the night, and to-morrow morning, I shall be my dear Niece Baldwin's most humble servant. [Exeunt.

Enter GEORGE and Sir CHARLES.

Geo. What, refuse me your assistance in such an hour—talk to me of prudence in a moment when I must be mad, if I am human! yes, be prudent, Sir, be prudent,
——the

—the man who can be discreet when his friend's happiness is at stake, may gain the approbation of his own heart, but mine renounces him——Where can Mr. Drummond be?

Sir Ch. I am at your command in every thing——I ask you only to reflect.

Geo. Yes, I do reflect, that in a few hours she will be irrecoverably another's —lost to me for ever—unfeeling brute! to sacrifice such a Woman to a man whom she despises!

Sir Ch. What then is your resolution?

Geo. There is but one way—she hangs on the point of a precipice, from which, if I do not snatch her in an instant, nothing can retrieve her.—We will follow the carriage on horseback; let your chaise attend us with our servants—I'll force her from this tyrant Uncle, carry her instantly to Dover, and in a few hours, breathe out my soul at her feet—in sweet security in France.

Sir Ch. Considering your plan is an *impromptu*, I admire its consistency—but, my dear George, have you weighed all its consequences?——your Father——

Geo. Will perhaps disinherit me—be it so—I have six hundred a year independent of his will—and six hundred a year in France with Emily Morley—kingdoms! empires! paradise!

Sir

Sir Ch. But are you certain she will partake it with you?

Geo. No——but supposing the worst—I shall, at least, have had the happiness to preserve her from a fate she dreads—for the rest I will trust to time and my ardent passion.

Sir Ch. Pity the days of chivalry are over, or what applause might'st thou not expect——advent'rous Knight!

Geo. Come, we have not a moment to lose——let us get our people ready to follow, the instant the carriage sets out.

Sir Ch. But, George—George—I'll not accompany you a step, after the Lady's in your protection——for if your Father shou'd surmise that I have any hand in the *enlevement*, I can hope for no success, when I ask him for my charming Harriet.

Geo. Agreed—let me have your chaise, and leave me to my fortune—I will not endanger your happiness—this key will let you in at the garden-door—you may give fifty reasons for your short absence.——Now, Cupid, Venus, Jove and Juno, leap into your chariots, and descend to our assistance.

[*Exeunt Sir CHARLES and GEORGE.*

Enter Lady DINAH.

Lady D. She's gone, and my alarms are at an end—'tis plain I had never the least founda-

foundation for my fears—what pass'd in the garden was mere gallantry, and the effects of her art; he suffered her Uncle to carry her off with an indifference that transports me. How weak have I been, to allow my credulity to be imposed on by their suggestions, and my temper ruffled at a time when 'twas of so much importance to me to have been serene!

Enter SUSAN.

Sus. Oh, my Lady, she's gone—the delightful obstinacy of the old Uncle—It is well Mr. Drummond was not here—I was afraid——

Lady D. Your joy wears a very familiar aspect—I know she's gone.

Sus. I beg pardon, my Lady—I thought I might congratulate your Ladyship on her being carried off——I was terribly afraid——

Lady D. Yes, you have had most extraordinary fears on the occasion. You ought to have known, that the man whom I had receiv'd as my Lover, could never have felt any thing like a serious passion for such a girl as that.

Sus. So, so, so! how soon our spirits are got up! [*Aside.*] I am sure, my Lady, 'twas not I who occasioned the interview in the garden to-day, that so enraged you, and confirmed your fears——you was
ready

ready enough then to believe all that was said against her.

Lady D. How dare you reproach me with the errors which you led me into?—'twas your fears I was govern'd by, and not my own; and your ridiculous plot was as absurd as your fears.

Sus. As to the plot, my Lady, I am sure 'twas a good one, and would have sent her packing, if the Uncle hadn't come——'twasn't our fault he came——We have had the same trouble, and——service is no inheritance, and I hope your Ladyship will consider——

Lady D. How dare you think of a reward for such conduct?—If you obtain my pardon, you ought to be highly gratified—leave me, Insolent, this moment.

Sus. [*Muttering.*] Ha!—and dare you use me in this manner?——I am glad you have betrayed yourself in time, when I can take a severe revenge? [*Aside.*]

[*Exit SUSAN.*]

Lady D. I have gone too far——Now must I court my servant, to forget the resentment which her impertinence occasioned——Well, 'tis but for a short time——the marriage over, and I have done with her—I must retire to my apartment, to recover my composure: perhaps he'll visit me there—but not to talk of veneration and respect again—Oh! I'll torment him

him for that. Nothing gives a Woman so fine an opportunity of plaguing her Lover, as an affectation of jealousy: if she feels it, she's his Slave; but, whilst she affects it—his Tyrant. [Exit.

Enter BELLA and HARRIET.

Har. How very unfortunate, that Mr. Drummond is absent!—he would have opposed the reasoning of Lady Dinah, and prevented their departure——Sure, never any thing was so cruel.

Bel. Oh, there's no bearing it——Your Father is quite a manageable being, compared to this odd, provoking mortal, whose imagined flexibility baffles art, reason, and every thing.

Har. Never shall I forget the look, wild, yet composed—agonized tho' calm, which she gave me, as her Uncle led her out. Her Lover must possess strange sentiments, to resolve to marry her, in spite of her aversion.

Bel. Sentiments! my dear—why he's a modern fine Gentleman; there is nothing he's so much afraid of as a fond Wife—If I was Miss Morley, I'd affect a most formidable fondness, and ten to one but she'd get rid of him.

Har. I wonder where Sir Charles is—
He pass'd me in the hall, and said in a
hasty

hasty manner, he must tear himself from me for half an hour.

Bel. I wonder rather where your Brother is——but the heart of a woman in love, is as unnatural as the ostrich's; it is no longer alive to any sentiment but one, and the tenderest connexions are absorbed in its passion.

Har. I hope it is not in your own heart, you find this picture of love.

Enter Sir CHARLES,

Bel. Oh—here's one of our truants, but where's the other?—poor George, I suppose, is binding his brow with willows.

Sir Ch. That's not George's style in love—he has too much spirit to cross his arms, and talk to his shadow, when he may employ his hours to more advantage at the feet of a fair Lady.

Bel. What do you mean?

Har. Where is my Brother?

Sir Ch. On the road to France,

Both. France!

Sir Ch. Unless Mr. Morley has as much valour as obstinacy—for George has pursued him, and, by this time, I dare swear has gained possession of his Niece.

Bel. Oh! how I doat on his Knight-errantry!—commend me to a lover, who, instead of patiently submitting to the circumstances that separate him from the ob-
ject

ject of his passion,—boldly takes the reins of Fortune in his own hands, and governs the accidents which he can't avoid.

Har. How can you praise such a daring conduct? I tremble for the consequences!

Sir Ch. What consequences, Madam, can he dread, who snatches the woman he loves from the arms of the man she hates?

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. My Master, Sir, is returned—the Lady fainted in the chaise, and he has carried her to Mr. Drummond's.

Sir Ch. The devil!—is he at home?

Ser. No, Sir—and Mr. Morley is come back too—he drove thro' the gates this minute.

Bel. Nay, then George will lose her at last—he was a fool for not pursuing his route.

Sir Ch. He has no chance now, but thro' Mr. Drummond; and what can he hope? Mr. Drummond has only reason on his side, and the passions of three to combat.

Bel. Ay, here he comes—and Mr. Hargrave, as loud as his huntsman.

Har. Let us fly to the parlour, and then we can send intelligence of what passes to George. [Exeunt.

Enter

Enter Mr. MORLEY and Mr. HAR-
GRAVE.

Mr. M. Yes, yes, 'tis fact—matter of fact, upon my honour—Your Son was the person who took her out of the coach.

Mr. H. Sir, it is impossible!—ha, ha, ha!—my Son!—why, he's under engagements that wou'd make it madness.

Mr. M. Then, Sir, you may depend upon it, the fit is on him now, for he clapt Emily into a chaise, whilst an impudent puppy fasten'd on me——egad! twenty years ago I'd have given him sauce to his Cornish hug—I could not discern his face—but t'other I'll swear to.

Mr. H. George! look for George there! I'll convince you, Sir, instantly——ha, ha!

Enter HARRIET.

Mr. H. Where's George?

Har. Sir, my Brother is at Mr. Drummond's.

Mr. H. There! I knew it could not be him, though you would not be persuaded.

Mr. M. What a plague! you can't persuade me out of my senses—Your Son, I aver, took her out of the coach—with her own consent, no doubt, and on an honourable design, without doubt—Sir, I give you joy of your daughter.

Mr. H. If it is on an honourable design, they may live on their honour, or starve with it——not a single sous shall they have of me—but I won't yet believe my George cou'd be such a fool.

Mr. M. Fool! Sir——The man who loves Emily gives no such proof of folly neither——but she shall be punished for hers——'twas a concerted affair, I see it plainly, all agreed upon—but she shall repent.

Mr. H. Your resentment, Sir, is extraordinary—I must tell you that my Son's ancestry, or the estate to which he is heir—if he has not forfeited by his disobedience, are not objects for the contempt of any man.

Mr. M. Very likely, Sir,—but they are objects to which I shall never be reconciled——What! have I been toiling these thirty years in Spain, to make my Niece a match for any man in England—to have her fortune settled by an adventure in a post-chaise, an evening's frolick for a young spark, who had nothing to do but push the old fellow into a corner, and whisk off with the girl?—Sir, if there was not another man in the kingdom, your Son shou'd not have my consent to marry Emily.

Mr. H. And if there was not another woman in England, I'd suffer the name of
Har-

Hargrave to be annihilated, rather than he should be husband to your Niece. [HARGRAVE and MORLEY walk about the Stage disordered.]

Enter Mr. DRUMMOND.

Mr. D. Gone!—her Uncle arrived, and the amiable girl gone——What infatuation, Mr. Hargrave, cou'd render you so blind to the happiness that awaited your family?——I'll follow this obdurate man—where's George?——look for George there—he shall hear reason.

Mr. H. There, Sir——that's the person to whom you must address your complaints.

Mr. D. Unfortunate!——I have made discoveries, that must have shaken even your prejudices—[*to Mr. HARGRAVE*]—but this Uncle!—surely, my dear Harriet, you might have prevailed.

Har. Sir, this gentleman is Mr. Morley——Mr. Drummond, Sir.

Mr. D. Hah! I beg pardon——Sir, I am rejoiced to see you; I understood you were gone.

Mr. M. I was gone, Sir; but I was robb'd of my Niece on the road—she was taken out of my coach, and carried off—which forced me to return.

Mr. D. Carried off!

Mr. H. Aye, Sir, carried off by George, whom you have trained to such a knowledge of his duty.

Mr. M. Stopt on the King's highway, Sir, by the fiery youth, and my Niece dragg'd from my side.

Mr. D. Admirable!

Mr. H. What's this right too?—By heaven, it is not to be borne.

Mr. D. Where are they?

Har. At your house, Sir——

Mr. M. What a country am I fallen into! can a person of your age and character approve of so rash and daring——

Mr. H. Let George do what he will—he's sure of his approbation.

Mr. D. Gentlemen——if you are sure Miss Morley is at my house, I am patience itself—she is too rich a prize to be gained without some warfare.

Mr. M. Sir, I am resolved to——

Enter Lady DINAH.

[*Exit HARRIET frighten'd.*]

Lady D. So, Mr. Hargrave! so, Sir!—what, your Son—this new insult deprives me of utterance—but your Son—what is the reason of this complicated outrage?

Mr. H. My dear Lady Dinah, I am as much enraged as you can be—but he shall fulfill his engagements—depend on it, he shall.

Mr.

Mr. M. Engagements!—what the young Gentleman was engaged too!—a very fine youth! upon my word.

Lady D. [*To Mr. HARGRAVE*] Your honour is concern'd, Sir—and if I was sure he was drawn in by the girl's art, and that he was convinced of the impropriety——

Mr. M. Drawn in by the girl's art!—whatever cause I may have to be offended with my Niece's conduct, Madam, no person shall speak of her with contempt in my presence—I presume, this gentleman's son was engaged to your daughter—but that's not a sufficient reason for——

Lady D. Daughter! impertinent!——No, Sir, 'twas to *me* that he was engaged—and, but for the arts of your Niece——

Mr. M. To you!——A matrimonial negociation between that young Fellow and you!——Nay then, 'fore George, I don't wonder at your ill temper——A disappointment in love at *your* time of life must be the devil.

Lady D. Mr. Hargrave, do you suffer me to be thus insulted?

Mr. H. Why, my Lady, we must bear something from this Gentleman——the mistake we made about his Niece, was a very ugly business.

Mr. D. I entreat you, Madam, to retire from a Family, to whom, if you suffer me to explain myself——

Lady D. What new insolence is this?

Mr. D. I would spare you, my Lady, but you will not spare yourself——Blush then, whilst I accuse you of entering into a base league with your Servants, to blast the reputation of an amiable young Lady, and drive her from the protection of Mr. Hargrave's family.

Mr. H. What! a league with her Servants? [*Aside.*]

Lady D. And how dare you accuse me of this——Am I to answer for the conduct of my servants?

Mr. D. The *villainy* of your servants is the consequence of those principles with which you have poison'd their minds. Robb'd of their religion, they were left without support——against temptations to which *you*, Madam, have felt, Philosophy opposes its shield in vain.

Lady D. I feel his superiority to my inmost soul——but he shall not see his triumph [*aside*]——Is it your virtue which prompts you to load me with injuries, to induce Mr. Hargrave to break through every tie of honour——through the most sacred engagements!

Mr. D. I have just heard these terms, nearly as much prostituted by your servants, who reproach you with not keeping your engagements to them.

Lady D. Ha! Am I then betrayed? [*aside.*]

Enter

Enter GEORGE, *leading* EMILY, *followed by* BELLA, HARRIET, *and* Sir CHARLES.

Geo. Miss Morley, Sir, commanded me to lead her to you—I cannot ask you to pardon a rashness, of which I do not repent.

Mr. H. Then I shall *make* you, I fancy.

Mr. M. Hah—did you really wish to return to me?

Em. I left Mr. Drummond's, Sir, the moment I knew you were here.

Mr. M. That's a good girl—I'll remember it. Come, child, the coach is at the door, and we must make speed to retrieve our lost time. But have a care, young Gentleman,—tho' I have pardon'd your extravagance once, a second attempt shall find me prepared for your reception.

Geo. If Miss Morley consents to go with you, Sir, you have no second attempt to fear. But since this moment is the crisis of our fate, thus I entreat you [*kneeling*]—you, to whom I have sworn eternal love, to become my wife. Consent, my charming Emily, and every moment of my future life shall thank you.

Mr. M. So, so, so!

Mr. H. What, without my leave?

Lady D. Amazing!

All together.

Em. At such a moment as this, meanly to disguise my sentiments would be unworthy of the woman, to whom you offer such a sacrifice——obtain the consent of those who have a right to dispose of us, and I'll give you my hand at the altar.

Mr. M. That you will not, my frank Madam——so no more ceremony, but away. [*Seizing her arm, and going off.*]

Mr. D. And will you go, impenetrable man—I have discovered, Sir, that your Niece is the daughter of Major Morley, who was one of the earliest friends of my youth——He would not have borne the distress she now endures——I will be a father to his orphan Emily, and ensure the felicity of two children, on the point of being sacrificed to the ambition and avarice of those, on whose hearts Nature has graven duties, which they wilfully mispel.

Lady D. What, Sir, are you not content with the insults you have offer'd to me and Mr. Hargrave, but you must interfere with this Gentleman in the disposal of his Niece!

Mr. M. What right have you, Sir, to dispose of our Children?

Mr. H. Aye, very true, you don't know how to value the authority of a parent.

Mr. D. Mistaken Men! into what an abyss of misery——perhaps of guilt, wou'd

wou'd you plunge them!——they claim from you happiness, and you withhold it——they shall receive it from me—I will settle the jointur'd land of my Harriet on Miss Morley, and George shall *now* partake that fortune to which I have already made him heir.

Mr. H. Ay, there's no stopping him—what can these servants have told him, that makes him so warm?——Egad, I'll hear their tale.

[*Exit, unperceived by Lady DINAH.*]

Mr. M. Why, Sir, this is extraordinary friendship indeed! settle jointur'd lands—I am glad Brother Tom had prudence enough to form such a connection, 'twas seldom he minded the main chance——Honour and a greasy knapsack, running about after ragged colours, instead——

Mr. D. Sir, *I* have served, and I love the profession.——The army is not more the school of honour than of philosophy—A true soldier is a citizen of the world; he considers every man of honour as his brother, and the urbanity of his heart gains his Country *subjects*, whilst his sword only vanquishes her *foes*.

Mr. M. Nay, if you have all this Romance, I don't wonder at your proposal——however, tho' your jointure lands might have been necessary for Major Morley's Daughter—My Niece, Sir, if she
marries

marries with my consent, shall be obliged to no man for a fortune.

Lady D. The insolence of making me witness to all this is insupportable—Is this you, Sir, who this very morning paid your vows to me?

Geo. Pardon, Madam, the error of this morning; I imagined myself paying my devoirs to a Lady who was to become my Mother.

Lady D. Your Mother! Sir——Your Mother!——Mr. Hargrave——ha, where is Mr. Hargrave?

Enter Mr. HARGRAVE.

Mr. H. I am here, my Lady—and have just heard a tale of so atrocious a nature from your servants—that I wou'd not, for half my estate, such an affair shou'd have happen'd in my family.

Lady D. And can you believe the malicious tale?

Mr. H. Indeed I do.

Lady D. Mr. Drummond's arts have then succeeded.

Mr. H. Your arts have not succeeded, my Lady, and you have *no* chance for a husband now, I believe, unless you prevail on George to run off with *you*.

Lady D. Insolent wretches!—order my chaise, I will not stay another moment beneath this roof—when persons of my rank,

rank, thus condescend to mix with Plebeians—like the Phoenix, which sometimes appears within the ken of common birds, they are stared at, jeered and hooted, till they are forced to ascend again to their proper region, to escape the flouts of—ignorance and envy. [Exit.

Mr. M. Well said, a rare spirit, faith, I see Ladies of quality have their privileges too.—[*As Lady D. goes off, GEO. fixes his eye on his Father, and points after her.*]

Mr. H. [Catching GEORGE'S hand.] My dear Boy, I believe we were wrong here—and I am heartily glad we have escaped—but I suppose you'll forget it when I tell you I have no objection to your endeavouring to prevail on this gentleman—

Geo. Nothing, dear Sir, can prevent my feeling the most unbounded gratitude for the permission—now may I hope, Sir—

Mr. M. Hope, Sir!—Upon my word I don't know what to say, you have somehow contrived to carry matters to such a length—that asking my consent is become a matter of form.

Mr. H. Upon my soul, I begin to find out, that in some cases one's children should lead.—Come, Sir,—do keep me in countenance, that I mayn't think I yielded too soon.

Mr. D. Your consent, Sir, is all we want, to become a very joyous circle—let us prevail

prevail on you to permit your beloved Emily to receive the addresses of my Godson, and you will many happy years hence recollect his boldness on the road, as the most fortunate rencounter of your life: you shall come and live amongst us, and we'll reconcile you to your native country: notwithstanding our ideas of the degeneracy of the times, we shall find room enough to act virtuously, and to enjoy in England, more securely than in any other country in the world,—the rewards of virtue.

Mr. M. Sir, I like you—promise me your friendship—and you shall dispose of my Niece.

Mr. D. I accept the condition with pleasure.

Mr. M. There it is now, this is always the way——persuaded out of every resolution—a perfect proverb for flexibility.

Geo. Oh, Sir, permit me——

Mr. M. Nay, no extacies——Emily dislikes you now you've got me on your side. What say you? [*to Em.*] don't you begin to feel your usual reluctance?

Em. The proof I have given of my sentiments, Sir, admits of no disguise—or, if disguise were necessary, I could not assume it.

Geo. Enchanting frankness! my heart, my life must thank you for this goodness.

But

But what shall I say to you—[*to DRUMMOND*] to you, Sir, to whom I already owe more than—

Mr. D. To me you owe nothing—the heart, George, must have some attachments——Mine has for many years been center'd in you——If I have struggled for your happiness, 'twas to gratify myself.

Geo. Oh, Sir! why will you continually give me such feelings, and yet refuse them utterance?—Seymour, behold the happiest of men!

Sir Ch. May your bliss, my dear George, be as permanent as 'tis great.—Allow me, Sir, [*to Mr. HARGRAVE*] to seize this propitious moment to ask your consent to a second union——Permit me to entreat Miss Hargrave for her hand, and I'll prove George a vain boaster, when he calls himself the happiest of men.

Mr. H. Why, Sir Charles, you have chosen a very lucky moment; but there's no moment in which I should not have heard this request with pleasure. Why, Harriet——if we may believe your eyes, you are not very angry with Sir Charles for this request.

Har. A request, Sir, which gives you so much pleasure ought not to give your Harriet pain.

Bel. Lord! you look so insulting with your happiness, and seem to think I make
(such

such an awkward figure amongst you—but here [*produces a letter*]——this informs me——that a certain person——

Geo. Of the name of—Belville—

Bel. Be quiet——is landed at Dover, and posting here—with all the saucy confidence our engagements inspire him with.

Mr. D. Say you so?——Then we'll have the three weddings celebrated on the same day.

Bel. Oh mercy!——I won't hear of it——*Love*, one might manage that perhaps—but *honour*, *obey*,——'tis strange the Ladies had never interest enough to get this ungallant form mended.

Mr. D. The marriage vow, my dear Bella, was wisely framed for common apprehensions——Love teaches a train of duties that no vow can reach——that refined minds only can perceive—but which they pay with the most delighted attention. You are now entering on this state——may You——and You [*to BELLA, significantly*] and You [*to the audience*] possess the blissful envied lot of—Married Lovers!

F I N I S.

THE
RIVALS,

A
COMEDY.

Dramatis Personae.

M E N.

Sir ANTHONY Sir LUCIUS

ABSOLUTE, O'TRIGGER,

Capt. ABSOLUTE, FAG,

FAULKLAND, DAVID,

ACRES, COACHMAN.

W O M E N.

Mrs. MALAPROP, JULIA,

LYDIA LANGUISH, LUCY.

Maid, Boy, Servants, *etc.*

T H E
R I V A L S.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

A STREET in BATH.

COACHMAN *crosses the stage.*—*Enter*
FAG, *looking after him.*

Fag. WHAT!—Thomas!—Sure 'tis
he?—What!—Thomas!—
Thomas!

Coach. Hay!—Odd's life!—Mr. Fag!—
give us your hand, my old fellow-servant.

Fag. Excuse my glove, Thomas:—I'm
dev'lish glad to see you, my lad: why,
my prince of charioteers, you look as
hearty!—but who the deuce thought of
seeing you in Bath!

Coach. Sure, Master, Madam Julia,
Harry, Mrs. Kate, and the postillion be
all come!

Fag. Indeed!

Coach. Aye! Master thought another fit
of the gout was coming to make him a
visit:—so he'd a mind to gi't the slip,

VOL. IV. K and

and whip we were all off at an hour's warning.

Fag. Aye, Aye! hasty in every thing, or it would not be Sir Anthony Absolute!

Coach. But tell us, Mr. Fag, how does young Master? Odd! Sir Anthony will stare to see the Captain here!

Fag. I do not serve Capt. Absolute now.—

Coach. Why sure!

Fag. At present I am employ'd by Ensign Beverley.

Coach. I doubt, Mr. Fag, you ha'n't changed for the better.

Fag. I have not changed, Thomas.

Coach. No! why didn't you say you had left young Master?

Fag. No——Well, honest Thomas, I must puzzle you no farther:—briefly then—Capt. Absolute and Ensign Beverley are one and the same person.

Coach. The devil they are!

Fag. So it is indeed, Thomas; and the *Ensign* half of my master being on guard at present—the *Captain* has nothing to do with me.

Coach. So, so!—what, this is some freak, I warrant!—Do, tell us, Mr. Fag, the meaning o't—you know I ha' trusted you.

Fag. You'll be secret, Thomas.

Coach. As a coach-horse.

Fag.

Fag. Why then the cause of all this is —LOVE,—Love, Thomas, who, as you may get read to you, has been a masquerader ever since the days of Jupiter.

Coach. Aye, aye;—I guessed there was a lady in the case:—but pray, why does your Master pass only for *Ensign*?—now if he had sham'd *General* indeed——

Fag. Ah! Thomas, there lies the mystery o'the matter.—Hark'ee, Thomas, my Master is in love with a lady of a very singular taste: a lady who likes him better as a *half-pay Ensign* than if she knew he was son and heir to Sir Anthony Absolute, a baronet with three thousand a-year!

Coach. That is an odd taste indeed!—but has she got the stuff, Mr. Fag; is she rich, hey?

Fag. Rich!—why, I believe she owns half the stocks!—Z——ds! Thomas, she could pay the national debt as easy as I could my washerwoman!—She has a lap-dog that eats out of gold,—she feeds her parrot with small pearls,—and all her thread-papers are made of bank-notes!

Coach. Bravo!—faith!——Odd! I warrant she has a set of thousands at least:—but does she draw kindly with the Captain?

Fag. As fond as pigeons.

Coach. May one hear her name?

Fag. Miss Lydia Languish—But there is an old tough aunt in the way;—though

by the bye—she has never seen my Master—for he got acquainted with Miss while on a visit in Gloucestershire.

Coach. Well—I wish they were once harness'd together in matrimony.—But pray, Mr. Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath?—I ha' heard a deal of it—here's a mort o' merry-making—hey?

Fag. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well—'tis a good lounge. Though at present we are, like other great assemblies, divided into parties——High-roomians and Low-roomians; however, for my part, I have resolved to stand neuter; and so I told Bob Brush at our last committee.

Coach. But what do the folks do here?

Fag. Oh! there are little amusements enough—in the morning we go to the pump-room, though neither my Master nor I drink the waters; after breakfast we saunter on the parades or play a game at billiards; at night we dance: but d—n the place, I'm tired of it: their regular hours stupify me—not a fiddle nor a card after eleven!—however Mr. Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little in private parties;—I'll introduce you there, Thomas—you'll like him much.

Coach. Sure I know Mr. Du-Peigne—you know his Master is to marry Madam Julia.

Fag.

Fag. I had forgot.—But Thomas you must polish a little—indeed you must:—here now—this wig!—what the devil do you do with a *wig*, Thomas?—none of the London whips of any degree of Ton wear *wigs* now.

Coach. More's the pity! more's the pity, I say.—Odd's life! when I heard how the lawyers and doctors had took to their own hair, I thought how 'twould go next:—Odd rabbit it! when the fashion had got foot on the Bar, I guess'd 'twould mount to the Box!—but 'tis all out of character, believe me, Mr. Fag: and look'ee, I'll never gi' up mine—the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

Fag. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that.

Coach. Why, bless you, the gentlemen of they professions ben't all of a mind—for in our village now tho'ff *Jack Gauge* the *exciseman*, has ta'en to his carrots, there's little Dick the farrier fwears he'll never forsake his *bob*, tho' all the college should appear with their own heads!

Fag. Indeed! well said Dick! but hold—mark! mark! Thomas.

Coach. Zooks! 'tis the Captain—Is that the lady with him?

Fag. No! no! that is Madam Lucy—my Master's mistress'd maid.—They lodge

at that house—but I must after him to tell him the news.

Coach. Odd! he's giving her money!—well, Mr. Fag——

Fag. Good bye, Thomas.—I have an appointment in Gydes' Porch this evening at eight; meet me there, and we'll make a little party. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

A Dressing-room in Mrs. MALAPROP'S lodgings.

LYDIA sitting on a sofa with a book in her hand.—*LUCY*, as just returned from a message.

Luc. Indeed, Ma'am, I transferr'd half the town in search of it:—I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I ha'n't been at.

Lyd. And could not you get "*The Reward of Constancy?*"

Lucy. No, indeed, Ma'am.

Lyd. Nor "*The Fatal Connection?*"

Lucy. No, indeed, Ma'am.

Lyd. Nor "*The Mistakes of the Heart?*"

Lucy. Ma'am, as ill-luck would have it, Mr. Bull said Miss Sukey Saunter had just fetch'd it away.

Lyd. Heigh-ho!—Did you inquire for "*The Delicate Distress?*"——

Lucy.

Lucy. ———Or “*The Memoirs of Lady Woodford?*” Yes indeed, Ma’am.——I ask’d every where for it; and I might have brought it from Mr. Frederick’s, but Lady Slattern Lounger, who had just sent it home, had so soiled and dog’s-ear’d it, it wa’n’t fit for a christian to read.

Lyd. Heigh-ho!—Yes, I always know when Lady Slattern has been before me.——She has a most observing thumb; and I believe cherishes her nails for the convenience of making marginal notes.——Well, child, what *have* you brought me?

Lucy. Oh! here Ma’am.

[*Taking books from under her cloke, and from her pockets.*]

This is “*The Gordian Knot,*”——and this “*Peregrine Pickle.*” Here are “*The Tears of Sensibility*” and “*Humphry Clinker.*” This is “*The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality, written by herself,*”——and here the second volume of “*The Sentimental Journey.*”

Lyd. Heigh-ho!—What are those books by the glass?

Lucy. The great one is only “*The whole Duty of Man*”——where I press a few blonds, Ma’am.

Lyd. Very well—give me the *sal volatile.*

Lucy. Is it in a blue cover, Ma’am?

Lyd. My smelling bottle, you simpleton!

Lucy. O, the drops!—here Ma'am.

Lyd. No note, Lucy?

Lucy. No indeed, Ma'am—but I have seen a certain person——

Lyd. What, my Beverley!—well Lucy?

Lucy. O Ma'am! he looks so desponding and melancholic!

Lyd. Hold Lucy!——here's some one coming—quick, see who it is.——

[*Exit LUCY.*

Surely I heard my cousin Julia's voice!

[*Re-enter LUCY.*

Lucy. Lud! Ma'am, here is Miss Melville.

Lyd. Is it possible!——

Enter JULIA.

Lyd. My dearest Julia, how delighted am I!—[*Embrace.*] How unexpected was this happiness!

Ful. True, Lydia—and our pleasure is the greater;——but what has been the matter?——you were denied to me at first!

Lyd. Ah! Julia, I have a thousand things to tell you!—but first inform me, what has conjur'd you to Bath?—Is Sir Anthony here?

Ful. He is—we are arrived within this hour—and I suppose he will be here to wait on Mrs. Malaprop as soon as he is dress'd.

Lyd.

Lyd. Then before we are interrupted, let me impart to you some of my distress!—I know your gentle nature will sympathize with me, tho' your prudence may condemn me!—My letters have inform'd you of my whole connexion with Beverley;—but I have lost him, Julia!—my aunt has discover'd our intercourse by a note she intercepted, and has confin'd me ever since!——Yet, would you believe it? she has fallen absolutely in love with a tall Irish baronet she met one night since we have been here, at Lady Macshuffle's rout.

Jul. You jest, Lydia!

Lyd. No, upon my word.—She absolutely carries on a kind of correspondence with him, under a feigned name though, till she chuses to be known to him;——but it is a *Delia* or a *Celia*, I assure you.

Jul. Then, surely, she is now more indulgent to her niece.

Lyd. Quite the contrary. Since she has discovered her own frailty, she is become more suspicious of mine. Then I must inform you of another plague!——That odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day; so that I protest I shall be teased out of all spirits!

Jul. Come, come, Lydia, hope the best.—Sir Anthony shall use his interest with Mrs. Malaprop.

Lyd.

Lyd. But you have not heard the worst. Unfortunately I had quarrell'd with my poor Beverley, just before my aunt made the discovery, and I have not seen him since, to make it up.

Ful. What was his offence?

Lyd. Nothing at all!——But, I don't know how it was, as often as we had been together, we had never had a quarrel!——And, somehow I was afraid he would never give me an opportunity.—So, last Thursday, I wrote a letter to myself, to inform myself that Beverley was at that time paying his addressee to another woman.—I sign'd it *your Friend unknown*, shew'd it to Beverley, charg'd him with his falsehood, put myself in a violent passion, and vow'd I'd never see him more.

Ful. And you let him depart so, and have not seen him since?

Lyd. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the matter out. I intended only to have teased him three days and a half, and now I've lost him for ever.

Ful. If he is as deserving and sincere as you have represented him to me, he will never give you up so. Yet consider, Lydia, you tell me he is but an ensign, and you have thirty thousand pounds!

Lyd. But you know I lose most of my fortune, if I marry without my aunt's consent,

consent, till of age; and that is what I have determin'd to do, ever since I knew the penalty.—Nor could I love the man, who would wish to wait a day for the alternative.

Jul. Nay, this is caprice!

Lyd. What, does Julia tax me with caprice?—I thought her lover Faulkland had enured her to it.

Jul. I do not love even *his* faults.

Lyd. But a-propos—you have sent to him, I suppose?

Jul. Not yet, upon my word—nor has he the least idea of my being in Bath.—Sir Anthony's resolution was so sudden, I could not inform him of it.

Lyd. Well, Julia, you are your own mistress, though under the protection of Sir Anthony, yet have you, for this long year, been the slave to the caprice, the whim, the jealousy of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay assuming the right of a husband, while you suffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

Jul. Nay, you are wrong entirely.—We were contracted before my father's death.—*That*, and some consequent embarrassments, have delay'd what I know to be my Faulkland's most ardent wish.—He is too generous to trifle on such a point.—And for his character, you wrong him there too.—No, Lydia, he is too proud,

proud, too noble to be jealous; if he is captrious, 'tis without dissembling; if fretful, without rudeness.—Unus'd to the foppery of love, he is negligent of the little duties expected from a lover—but being unhackney'd in the passion, his love is ardent and sincere; and as it engrosses his whole soul, he expects every thought and emotion of his mistress to move in unison with his.—Yet, though his pride calls for this full return—his humility makes him undervalue those qualities in him, which should entitle him to it; and not feeling why he should be lov'd to the degree he wishes, he still suspects that he is not lov'd enough:—This temper, I must own, has cost me many unhappy hours; but I have learn'd to think myself his debtor, for those imperfections which arise from the ardour of his love.

Lyd. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him.—But tell me candidly, Julia, had he never sav'd your life, do you think you should have been attach'd to him as you are?—Believe me, the rude blast that overset your boat was a prosperous gale of love to him.

Ful. Gratitude may have strengthened my attachment to Mr. Faulkland, but I lov'd him before he had preserv'd me; yet surely that alone were an obligation sufficient.

Lyd.

Lyd. Obligation!—Why a water-spaniel would have done as much.—Well, I should never think of giving my heart to a man because he could swim!

Ful. Come, Lydia, you are too inconsiderate.

Lyd. Nay, I do but jest.—What's here?

Enter L U C Y in a hurry.

Lucy. O Ma'am, here is Sir Anthony Absolute just come home with your aunt.

Lyd. They'll not come here.—Lucy do you watch. *[Exit L U C Y.]*

Ful. Yet I must go.—Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet, he'll detain me, to shew me the town.—I'll take another opportunity of paying my respects to Mrs. Malaprop, when she shall treat me, as long as she chooses, with her select words so ingeniously *misapplied*, without being *mispronounced*.

Re-enter L U C Y.

Lucy. O Lud! Ma'am, they are both coming up stairs.

Lyd. Well, I'll not detain you Coz.—Adieu, my dear Julia, I'm sure you are in haste to fend to Faulkland.—There—through my room you'll find another stair-case.

Ful. Adieu.—*[Embrace.] [Exit JULIA.]*
Lyd.

Lyd. Here, my dear Lucy, hide these books.—Quick, quick.—Fling *Peregrine Pickle* under the toilet—throw *Roderick Random* into the closet—put *the Innocent Adultery* into *The Whole Duty of Man*—thrust *Lord Aimworth* under the sofa—cram *Ovid* behind the bolster—there—put *the Man of Feeling* into your pocket—so, so, now lay Mrs. Chapone in sight, and leave Fordyce's Sermons open on the table.

Lucy. O burn it, Ma'am, the hair-dresser has torn away as far as Proper Pride.

Lyd. Never mind—open at Sobriety.—Fling me Lord Chesterfield's Letters.—Now for 'em.

Enter Mrs. MALAPROP and Sir ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. Mal. There, Sir Anthony, there sits the deliberate Simpleton, who wants to disgrace her family, and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling!

Lyd. Madam, I thought you once——

Mrs. Mal. You thought, Miss!—I don't know any business you have to think at all—thought does not become a young woman; the point we would request of you is, that you will promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, quite from your memory.

Lyd.

Lyd. Ah! Madam! our memories are independent of our wills.—It is not so easy to forget.

Mrs. Mal. But I say it is, Miss; there is nothing on earth so easy as to *forget*, if a person chooses to set about it.—I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle as if he had never existed—and I thought it my duty so to do; and let me tell you, Lydia, these violent memories don't become a young woman.

Sir Anth. Why sure she won't pretend to remember what she's order'd not!—aye, this comes of her reading!

Lyd. What crime, Madam, have I committed to be treated thus?

Mrs. Mal. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter; you know I have proof controvertible of it.—But tell me, will you promise to do as you're bid?—Will you take a husband of your friends choosing?

Lyd. Madam, I must tell you plainly, that had I no preference for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

Mrs. Mal. What business have you, Miss, with *preference* and *aversion*? They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know, that as both always wear off, 'tis safest in matrimony to begin with a little *aversion*. I am sure I hated your
poor

poor dear uncle before marriage as if he'd been a black-a-moor—and yet, Miss, you are sensible what a wife I made!—and when it pleas'd Heav'n to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed!—But suppose we were going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley?

Lyd. Could I belie my thoughts so far, as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

Mrs. Mal. Take yourself to your room.—You are fit company for nothing but your own ill-humours.

Lyd. Willingly, Ma'am—I cannot change for the worse. [*Exit LYDIA.*

Mrs. Mal. There's a little intricate hussy for you!

Sir Anth. It is not to be wonder'd at, Ma'am—all this is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read.—Had I a thousand daughters, by Heavens! I'd as soon have them taught the black-art as their alphabet!

Mrs. Mal. Nay, nay, Sir Anthony, you are an absolute misanthropy.

Sir Anth. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library!—She had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes, with marbled covers!—From that moment I guess'd
how

how full of duty I should see her mistress!

Mrs. Mal. Those are vile places, indeed!

Sir Anth. Madam, a circulating library in a town is, as an ever-green tree, of diabolical knowledge!——It blossoms through the year!——And depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last.

Mrs. Mal. Well, but Sir Anthony, your wife, Lady Absolute, was fond of books.

Sir Anth. Aye—and injury sufficient they were to her, Madam.—But were I to chuse another helpmate, the extent of her erudition should consist in her knowing her simple letters, without their mischievous combinations;—and the summit of her science be—her ability to count as far as twenty.—The first, Mrs. Malaprop, would enable her to work *A. A.* upon my linen;—and the latter would be quite sufficient to prevent her giving me a shirt, No. 1. and a stock, No. 2.

Mrs. Mal. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony, you surely speak laconically!

Sir Anth. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation, now, what would you have a woman know?

Mrs. Mal. Observe me, Sir Anthony.—I would by no means wish a daughter

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of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman; for instance—I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or Algebra, or Simony, or Fluxions, or Paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning——neither would it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments;—But, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice.—Then, Sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts;—and as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries;—but above all, Sir Anthony, she should be mistress of orthodoxy, that she might not mis-spell, and mis-pronounce words so shamefully as girls usually do; and likewise that she might reprehend the true meaning of what she is saying.—This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know;—and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

Sir Anth. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you; though I must confess, that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question.—But, Mrs. Malaprop, to

to the more important point in debate,—you say, you have no objection to my proposal.

Mrs. Mal. None, I assure you.—I am under no positive engagement with Mr. Acres, and as Lydia is so obstinate against him, perhaps your son may have better success.

Sir Anth. Well, Madam, I will write for the boy directly.—He knows not a syllable of this yet, though I have for some time had the proposal in my head. He is at present with his regiment.

Mrs. Mal. We have never seen your son, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his side.

Sir Anth. Objection!—let him object if he dare!—No, no, Mrs. Malaprop, Jack knows that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly.—My process was always very simple—in their younger days, 'twas “Jack, do this;”—if he demur'd—I knock'd him down—and if he grumbled at that—I always sent him out of the room.

Mrs. Mal. Aye, and the properest way, o' my conscience!—nothing is so conciliating to young people as severity.—Well, Sir Anthony, I shall give Mr. Acres his discharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your son's invocations;—and I hope

you will represent *her* to the Captain as an object not altogether illegible.

Sir Anth. Madam, I will handle the subject prudently.—Well, I must leave you—and let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl;—take my advice—keep a tight hand—if she rejects this proposal—clap her under lock and key:—and if you were just to let the servants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days, you can't conceive how she'd come about! *[Exit Sir ANTH.]*

Mrs. Mal. Well, at any rate I shall be glad to get her from under my intuition.—She has some-how discovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger—sure, Lucy can't have betray'd me!—No, the girl is such a simpleton, I should have made her confess it.—Lucy!—Lucy!—*[calls]* Had she been one of your artificial ones, I should never have trusted her.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Did you call, Ma'am?

Mrs. Mal. Yes, girl.—Did you see Sir Lucius while you was out?

Lucy. No, indeed, Ma'am, not a glimpse of him.

Mrs. Mal. You are sure, Lucy, that you never mention'd—

Lucy.

Lucy. O Gemini! I'd sooner cut my tongue out.

Mrs. Mal. Well, don't let your simplicity be impos'd on.

Lucy. No, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. So, come to me presently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius!—but mind Lucy—if ever you betray what you are entrusted with—unless it be other people's secrets to me, you forfeit my malevolence for ever:—and your being a simpleton shall be no excuse for your locality. *[Exit Mrs. MALAPROP.]*

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha!—So, my dear *simplicity*, let me give you a little respite—*[altering her manner]*—let girls in my station be as fond as they please of appearing expert, and knowing in their trusts;—commend me to a mask of *silliness*, and a pair of sharp eyes for my own interest under it!—Let me see to what account I have turn'd my *simplicity* lately—*[looks at a paper]* For abetting Miss Lydia Languish in a design of running away with an Ensign!—in money—sundry times—twelve pound twelve—gowns, five—bats, ruffles, caps, &c. &c.—numberless!—From the said Ensign, within this last month, six guineas and a half.—About a quarter's pay!—Item, from Mrs. Malaprop, for betraying the young people to her—when I found

matters were likely to be discovered—two guineas, and a black paduasoy.—Item, from Mr. Acres, for carrying divers letters—which I never deliver'd—two guineas, and a pair of buckles.—Item, from Sir Lucius O' Trigger—three crowns—two gold pocket-pieces—and a silver snuff-box!—Well done, simplicity!—yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe, that he was corresponding, not with the Aunt, but with the Niece: for, though not over rich, I found he had too much pride and delicacy to sacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the necessities of his fortune. [Exit.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

*Captain ABSOLUTE'S Lodgings.**Captain ABSOLUTE and FAG.*

Fag. SIR, while I was there, Sir Anthony came in: I told him, you had sent me to inquire after his health, and to know if he was at leisure to see you.

Abs. And what did he say, on hearing I was at Bath?

Fag. Sir, in my life I never saw an elderly gentleman more astonished! He started back two or three paces, rapt out a dozen interjectoral oaths, and asked, what the devil had brought you here!

Abs. Well, Sir, and what did you say?

Fag. O, I lied, Sir—I forgot the precise lie, but you may depend on't; he got no truth from me. Yet, with submission, for fear of blunders in future, I should be glad to fix what *has* brought us to Bath: in order that we may lie a little consistently.—Sir Anthony's servants were curious, Sir, very curious indeed.

Abs. You have said nothing to them—?

Fag. O, not a word, Sir—not a word.—Mr. Thomas, indeed, the coachman,

whom I take to be the discreetest of whips—

Abs. S'death!—you rascal! you have not trusted him!

Fag. O, *no*, Sir—no—no—not a syllable, upon my veracity!—He was, indeed, a little inquisitive; but I was fly, Sir—devilish fly!—My Master, said I, honest Thomas, you know, Sir, one says *honest* to one's inferiors, is come to Bath to *recruit*—Yes, Sir—I said, *to recruit*—and whether for men, money, or constitution, you know, Sir, is nothing to him, nor any one else.

Abs. Well—*recruit* will do—let it be so—

Fag. O, Sir, *recruit* will do surprisingly—indeed, to give the thing an air, I told Thomas, that your Honour had already enlisted, five disbanded chairmen, seven minority waiters, and thirteen billiard markers.

Abs. You blockhead, never say more than is necessary.

Fag. I beg pardon, Sir—I beg pardon—But with submission, a lie is nothing unless one supports it.—Sir, whenever I draw on my invention for a good current lie, I always forge *indorsements*, as well as the bill.

Abs. Well, take care you don't hurt your credit, by offering too much security.—Is Mr. Faulkland returned?

Fag.

Fag. He is above, Sir, changing his dress.

Abs. Can you tell whether he has been informed of Sir Anthony's and Miss Melville's arrival?

Fag. I fancy not, Sir; he has seen no one since he came in, but his gentleman, who was with him at Bristol.—I think, Sir, I hear Mr. Faulkland coming down—

Abs. Go, tell him, I am here.

Fag. Yes, Sir—[*going*] I beg pardon, Sir, but should Sir Anthony call, you will do me the favour to remember, that we are *recruiting*, if you please.

Abs. Well, well.

Fag. And in tenderness to my character, if your Honour could bring in the chairman and waiters, I shall esteem it as an obligation;—for though I never scruple a lie to serve my Master, yet it *hurts* one's conscience, to be found out. [Exit.

Abs. Now for my whimsical friend—if he does not know that his mistress is here, I'll tease him a little before I tell him—

Enter FAULKLAND.

Faulkland, you're welcome to Bath again; you are punctual in your return.

Faulk. Yes; I had nothing to detain me, when I had finished the business I went on. Well, what news since I left you? How stand matters between you and Lydia?

Abs.

Abs. Faith, much as they were; I have not seen her since our quarrel, however I expect to be recalled every hour.

Faulk. Why don't you persuade her to go off with you at once?

Abs. What, and lose two thirds of her fortune? You forget that my friend.—No, no, I could have brought her to that long ago.

Faulk. Nay then, you trifle too long—if you are sure of *her*, propose to the aunt *in your own character*, and write to Sir Anthony for his consent.

Abs. Softly, softly, for though I am convinced my little Lydia would elope with me as Ensign Beverley, yet am I by no means certain that she would take me with the impediment of our friend's consent, a regular humdrum wedding, and the reversion of a good fortune on my side; no, no, I must prepare her gradually for the discovery, and make myself necessary to her, before I risk it.—Well, but Faulkland, you'll dine with us to-day at the Hotel!

Faulk. Indeed I cannot: I am not in spirits to be of such a party.

Abs. By Heavens! I shall forswear your company. You are the most teasing, captious, incorrigible lover!—Do love like a man.

Faulk. I own I am unfit for company.

Abs.

Abs. Am not *I* a lover; aye, and a romantic one too? Yet do I carry every where with me such a confounded farago of doubts, fears, hopes, wishes, and all the flimsy furniture of a country Miss's brain!

Faulk. Ah! Jack, your heart and soul are not, like mine, fixed immutably on one only object.—You throw for a large stake, but losing—you could stake, and throw again:—but I have set my sum of happiness on this cast, and not to succeed, were to be stript of all.

Abs. But for Heaven's sake! what grounds for apprehension can your whimsical brain conjure up at present? Has Julia mis'd writing this last post? or was her last too tender, or too cool; or too grave, or too gay; or——

Faulk. Nay, nay, Jack.

Abs. Why, her love—her honour—her prudence, you cannot doubt.

Faulk. O! upon my soul, I never have;—but what grounds for apprehension did you say? Heavens! are there not a thousand! I fear for her spirits—her health—her life.—My absence may fret her; her anxiety for my return, her fears for me, may oppress her gentle temper. And for her health—does not every hour bring me cause to be alarmed? If it rains, some shower may even then have chilled her
delicate

delicate frame!——If the wind be keen, some rude blast may have affected her! The heat of noon, the dews of the evening, may endanger the life of her, for whom only I value mine. O! Jack, when delicate and feeling souls are separated, there is not a feature in the sky, not a movement of the elements; not an aspiration of the breeze, but hints some cause for a lover's apprehension!

Abs. Aye, but we may choose whether we will take the hint or no.—Well then, Faulkland, if you were convinced that Julia was well and in spirits, you would be entirely content.

Faulk. I should be happy beyond measure—I'm anxious only for that.

Abs. Then to cure your anxiety at once—Miss Melville is in perfect health, and is at this moment in Bath.

Faulk. Nay Jack—don't trifle with me.

Abs. She is arrived here with my father within this hour.

Faulk. Can you be serious?

Abs. I thought you knew Sir Anthony better than to be surpris'd at a sudden whim of this kind.—Seriously then, it is as I tell you—upon my honour.

Falk. My dear friend!——Hollo, Du-Peigne! my hat—my dear Jack—*now nothing on earth can give me a moment's uneasiness.*

Enter

Enter F A G.

Fag. Sir, Mr. Acres just arrived is below.

Abs. Stay, Faulkland, this Acres lives within a mile of Sir Anthony, and he shall tell you how your mistress has been ever since you left her.—*Fag*, shew the gentleman up.—[*Exit F A G.*

Faulk. What, is he much acquainted in the family?

Abs. O, very intimate: I insist on your not going: besides, his character will divert you.

Faulk. Well, I should like to ask him a few questions.

Abs. He is likewise a rival of mine—that is of my *other self's*, for he does not think his friend Capt. Absolute ever saw the lady in question;—and it is ridiculous enough to hear him complain to me of *one Beverley* a concealed sculking rival, who——

Faulk. Hush!—He's here.

Enter A C R E S.

Acres. Hah! my dear friend, noble captain, and honest Jack, how do'st thou? just arrived faith, as you see.—Sir, your humble servant. Warm work on the roads Jack—Odds, whips and wheels, I've travelled like a Comet, with a tail of dust all the way as long as the Mall:

Abs.

Abs. Ah! Bob, you are indeed an eccentric Planet, but we know your attraction hither—give me leave to introduce Mr. Faulkland to you; Mr. Faulkland, Mr. Acres.

Acres. Sir, I am most heartily glad to see you: Sir, I solicit your connections.—Hey Jack—what this is Mr. Faulkland, who——

Abs. Aye, Bob, Miss Melville's, Mr. Faulkland.

Acres. Od'so! she and your father can be but just arrived before me—I suppose you have seen them.——Ah! Mr. Faulkland, you are indeed a happy man.

Faulk. I have not seen Miss Melville yet, Sir—I hope she enjoyed full health and spirits in Devonshire.

Acres. Never knew her better in my life, Sir,—never better.—Odd's Blushes and Blooms! she has been as healthy as the German Spa.

Faulk. Indeed!—I did hear that she had been a little indisposed.

Acres. False, false, Sir——only said to vex you: quite the reverse I assure you.

Faulk. There, Jack, you see she has the advantage of me; I had almost fretted myself ill.

Abs. Now are you angry with your mistress for not having been sick.

Faulk.

Faulk. No, no, you misunderstand me:—yet surely a little trifling indisposition is not an unnatural consequence of absence from those we love.—Now confess—isn't there something unkind in this violent, robust, unfeeling health?

Abs. O, it was very unkind of her to be well in your absence to be sure!

Acres. Good apartments, Jack.

Faulk. Well Sir, but you were saying that Miss Melville has been so *exceedingly* well—what then she has been merry and gay I suppose?—Always in spirits—hey?

Acres. Merry, Odds Crickets! she has been the bell and spirit of the company wherever she has been—so lively and entertaining! so full of wit and humour!

Faulk. There, Jack, there.—O, by my soul! there is an innate levity in woman, that nothing can overcome.—What! happy and I away!

Abs. Have done: how foolish this is! just now you were only apprehensive for your mistress's *spirits*.

Faulk. Why Jack, have I been the joy and spirit of the company?

Abs. No indeed, you have not.

Faulk. Have I been lively and entertaining?

Abs. O, upon my word, I acquit you.

Faulk. Have I been full of wit and humour?

Abs.

Abs. No, faith, to do you justice, you have been confounded stupid indeed.

Acres. What's the matter with the gentleman?

Abs. He is only expressing his great satisfaction at hearing that Julia has been so well and happy—that's all—hey, Faulkland?

Faulk. Oh! I am rejoiced to hear it—yes, yes, she has a *happy* disposition!

Acres. That she has indeed—then she is so accomplished—so sweet a voice—so expert at her Harpsichord—such a mistress of flat and sharp, squallante, rumblante, and quiverante!—there was this time month—Odds Minnums and Crotchets! how she did chirup at Mrs. Piano's Concert.

Faulk. There again, what say you to this? you see she has been all mirth and song—not a thought of me!

Abs. Pho! man, is not music the food of love?

Faulk. Well, well, it may be so.—Pray Mr.—what's his d—d name?—Do you remember what Songs Miss Melville sung?

Acres. Not I, indeed.

Abs. Stay now, they were some pretty, melancholy, purling stream airs, I warrant; perhaps you may recollect:—did she sing —“*When absent from my soul's delight?*”

Acres.

Acres. No, that wa'n't it.

Abs. Or——“Go, gentle Gales!”——

“Go, gentle Gales!” [*sings.*]

Acres. O no! nothing like it.—Odds flaps? now I recollect one of them—“My heart's my own, my will is free.” [*sings.*]

Faulk. Fool! fool that I am! to fix all my happiness on such a trifler! S'death! to make herself the pipe and ballad-monger of a circle! to sooth her light heart with catches and glees!—What can you say to this, Sir?

Abs. Why, that I should be glad to hear my mistress had been so merry, Sir.

Faulk. Nay, nay, nay—I am not sorry that she has been happy—no, no, I am glad of that—I would not have had her sad or sick—yet surely a sympathetic heart would have shewn itself even in the choice of a song—she might have been temperately healthy, and somehow, plaintively gay;—but she has been dancing too, I doubt not!

Acres. What does the gentleman say about dancing?

Abs. He says the lady we speak of dances as well as she sings.

Acres. Aye truly, does she—there was at our last race-ball——

Faulk. Hell and the devil! There! there!—I told you so! I told you so! Oh! she thrives in my absence!—Dancing!—

but her whole feelings have been in opposition with mine!—I have been anxious, silent, pensive, sedentary—my days have been hours of care, my nights of watchfulness.—She has been all Health! Spirit! Laugh! Song! Dance!——Oh! d—n'd, d—n'd levity!

Abs. For Heaven's sake! Faulkland, don't expose yourself so.—Suppose she has danced, what then?—does not the ceremony of society often oblige——

Faulk. Well, well, I'll contain myself—perhaps, as you say—for form sake.—What, Mr. Acres, you were praising Miss Melville's manner of dancing a *minuet*—hey?

Acres. O I dare insure her for that—but what I was going to speak of was her *country dancing*:—Odds swimnings! she has such an air with her!—

Faulk. Now disappointment on her!—defend this, Absolute, why don't you defend this?—Country-dances! jiggs, and reels! am I to blame now? A Minuet I could have forgiven—I should not have minded that—I say I should not have regarded a Minuet——but *Country-dances*! Z——ds! had she made one in a *Cotillon*——I believe I could have forgiven even that—but to be monkey-led for a night!—to run the gauntlet thro' a string of amorous palming puppies!—to shew paces like

like a managed filly!——O Jack, there never can be but *one* man in the world, whom a truly modest and delicate woman ought to pair with in a *Country-dance*; and even then, the rest of the couples should be her great uncles and aunts!

Abs. Aye, to be sure!—grand-fathers and grand-mothers!

Faulk. If there be but one vicious mind in the Set, 'twill spread like a contagion—the action of their pulse beats to the lascivious movement of the jig—their quivering, warm-breath'd sighs impregnate the very air——the atmosphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous spark darts thro' every link of the chain!——I must leave you——I own I am somewhat flurried—and that confounded looby has perceived it. [*Going.*

Abs. Aye, aye, you are in a hurry to throw yourself at Julia's feet.

Faulk. I'm not in a humour to be trifled with—I shall see her only to upbraid her. [*Going.*

Abs. Nay, but stay Faulkland, and thank Mr. Acres for his good news.

Faulk. D—n his news!

[*Exit FAULKLAND.*

Abs. Ha! ha! ha! poor Faulkland five minutes since—"nothing on earth could give him a moment's uneasiness!"

Acres. The gentleman wa'n't angry at my praising his mistress, was he?

Abs. A little jealous, I believe, Bob.

Acres. You don't say so? Ha! ha! jealous of me—that's a good joke.

Abs. There's nothing strange in that, Bob: let me tell you, that sprightly grace and insinuating manner of your's will do some mischief among the girls here.

Abs. Ah! you joke—ha! ha! mischief—ha! ha! but you know I am not my own property, my dear Lydia, has fore-stalled me.—She could never abide me in the country, because I used to dress so badly—but odds frogs and tambours! I shan't take matters so here—now ancient Madam has no voice in it—I'll make my old clothes know who's master—I shall straitway cashier the hunting frock—and render my leather breeches incapable—My hair has been in training some time.

Abs. Indeed!

Acres. Aye—and tho'ff the side-curls are a little restive, my hind-part takes to it very kindly.

Abs. O, you'll polish, I doubt not.

Acres. Absolutely I propose so—then if I can find out this Ensign Beverley, odds triggers and flints! I'll make him know the difference o't.

Abs.

Abf. Spoke like a man——but pray, Bob, I observe you have got an odd kind of a new method of swearing——

Acres. Ha! ha! you've taken notice of it—'tis genteel, isn't?—I didn't invent it myself though; but a commander in our militia—a great scholar, I assure you—says that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and that nothing but their antiquity makes them respectable;—because, he says, the ancients would never stick to an oath or two, but would say By Jove! or by Bacchus! or by Mars! or by Venus! or by Pallas! according to the sentiment—so that to swear with propriety, says my little Major, the “oath should be an echo to the sense;” and this we call the *oath referential*, or *sentimental swearing*—ha! ha! ha! 'tis genteel, isn't it?

Abf. Very genteel, and very new indeed——and I dare say will supplant all other figures of imprecation.

Acres. Aye, aye, the best terms will grow obsolete——D—ns have had their day.

Enter F A G.

Fag. Sir, there is a gentleman below, desires to see you—shall I shew him into the parlour?

Abf. Aye—you may.

Acres. Well, I must be gone——

M 3

Abf.

Abs. Stay; who is it, Fag?

Fag. Your father, Sir.

Abs. You puppy, why didn't you shew him up directly? [Exit F A G.]

Acres. You have business with Sir Anthony.—I expect a message from Mrs. Malaprop at my lodgings—I have sent also to my dear friend Sir Lucius O'Trigger.—Adieu, Jack, we must meet at night—Odds bottles and glasses! you shall give me a dozen bumpers to little Lydia.

Abs. That I will with all my heart.

[Exit A C R E S.]

Abs. Now for a parental lecture—I hope he has heard nothing of the business that has brought me here.—I wish the gout had held him fast in Devonshire, with all my soul!

Enter Sir ANTHONY.

Abs. Sir, I am delighted to see you here; and looking so well!—your sudden arrival at Bath made me apprehensive for your health.

Sir Anth. Very apprehensive, I dare say, Jack.—What, you are recruiting here, hey?

Abs. Yes, Sir, I am on duty.

Sir Anth. Well, Jack, I am glad to see you, tho' I did not expect it, for I was going to write to you on a little matter of business.

business.—Jack, I have been considering that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.

Abs. Pardon me, Sir, I never saw you look more strong and hearty; and I pray frequently that you may continue so.

Sir Anth. I hope your prayers may be heard with all my heart. Well then, Jack, I have been considering that I am so strong and hearty, I may continue to plague you a long time.—Now, Jack, I am sensible that the income of your commission, and what I have hitherto allowed you, is but a small pittance for a lad of your spirit.

Abs. Sir, you are very good.

Sir Anth. And it is my wish, while yet I live, to have my Boy make some figure in the world.—I have resolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

Abs. Sir, your kindness overpowers me—such generosity makes the gratitude of reason more lively than the sensations even of filial affection.

Sir Anth. I am glad you are so sensible of my attention—and you shall be master of a large estate in a few weeks.

Abs. Let my future life, Sir, speak my gratitude: I cannot express the sense I have of your munificence.—Yet, Sir, I presume you would not wish me to quit the army?

Sir Anth. O, that shall be as your wife chooses.

Abs. My wife, Sir!

Sir Anth. Aye, aye, settle that between you—settle that between you.

Abs. A wife, Sir, did you say?

Sir Anth. Aye, a wife—why; did not I mention her before?

Abs. Not a word of it, Sir.

Sir Anth. Odd so!—I mustn't forget *her* tho'.—Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by a marriage—the fortune is saddled with a wife—but I suppose that makes no difference.

Abs. Sir! Sir!—you amaze me!

Sir Anth. Why, what the d——l's the matter with the fool? Just now you were all gratitude and duty.

Abs. I was, Sir,—you talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

Sir Anth. Why—what difference does that make? Odd's life, Sir! if you have the estate, you must take it with the live stock on it, as it stands.

Abs. If my happiness is to be the price, I must beg leave to decline the purchase.——Pray, Sir, who is the lady?

Sir Anth. What's that to you, Sir?—Come, give me your promise to love, and to marry her directly.

Abs.

Abs. Sure, Sir, this is not very reasonable, to summon my affections for a lady I know nothing of!

Sir Anth. I am sure, Sir, 'tis more unreasonable in you to *object* to a lady you know nothing of.

Abs. Then, Sir, I must tell you plainly, that my inclinations are fix'd on another.

Sir Anth. They are, are they? well, that's lucky—because you will have more merit in your obedience to me.

Abs. Sir, my heart is engaged to an Angel.

Sir Anth. Then pray let it send an excuse.—It is very sorry—but *business* prevents it's waiting on her.

Abs. But my vows are pledged to her.

Sir Anth. Let her foreclose, Jack; let her foreclose; they are not worth redeeming: besides, you have the Angel's vows in exchange, I suppose; so there can be no loss there.

Abs. You must excuse me, Sir, if I tell you, once for all, that in this point I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Hark'ee Jack;—I have heard you for some time with patience—I have been cool,—quite cool;—but take care—you know I am compliance itself—when I am not thwarted;—no one more easily led—when I have my own way;—but don't put me in a phrenzy.

Abs.

Abs. Sir, I must repeat it—in this I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Now, d—n me! if ever I call you *Jack* again while I live!

Abs. Nay, Sir, but hear me.

Sir Anth. Sir, I won't hear a word—not a word! not one word! so give me your promise by a nod—and I'll tell you what, *Jack*—I mean, you *Dog*—If you don't, by——

Abs. What, Sir, promise to link myself to some mass of ugliness! to——

Sir Anth. Z——ds! firrah! the lady shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder; she shall be as crooked as the Crescent; her one eye shall roll like the Bull's in Coxe's museum—she shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew—she shall be all this, firrah!—yet I'll make you ogle her all day, and sit up all night to write sonnets on her beauty.

Abs. This is reason and moderation indeed!

Sir Anth. None of your sneering, puppy! no grinning, jackanapes!

Abs. Indeed, Sir, I never was in a worse humour for mirth in my life.

Sir Anth. 'Tis false, Sir! I know you are laughing in your sleeve: I know you'll grin when I am gone, firrah!

Abs. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

Sir

Sir Anth. None of your passion, Sir! none of your violence! if you please.—It won't do with me, I promise you.

Abs. Indeed, Sir, I never was cooler in my life.

Sir Anth. 'Tis a confounded lie!——I know you are in a passion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog! but it won't do.

Abs. Nay, Sir, upon my word.

Sir Anth. So you will fly out! can't you be cool, like me? What the devil good can *Passion* do!—*Passion* is of no service, you impudent, insolent, over-bearing Reprobate!——There you sneer again!——don't provoke me!——but you rely upon the mildness of my temper—you do, you Dog! you play upon the weakness of my disposition! Yet take care—the patience of a saint may be overcome at last!——but mark! I give you six hours and a half to consider of this: if you then agree, without any condition, to do every thing on earth that I choose, why—confound you! I may in time forgive you——If not, Z——ds! don't enter the same hemisphere with me! don't dare to breath the same air, or use the same light with me; but get an atmosphere and sun of your own! I'll strip you of your commission; I'll lodge a five-and-three-pence in the hands of trustees, and you shall live on the interest.

terest.—I'll disown you, I'll disinherit you, I'll unget you! and—d—n me, if ever I call you Jack again!

[*Exit Sir ANTHONY.*

ABSOLUTE, *solus.*

Abs. Mild, gentle, considerate father—I kiss your hands.—What a tender method of giving his opinion in these matters Sir Anthony has! I dare not trust him with the truth.—I wonder what old, wealthy Hag it is that he wants to bestow on me!—yet he married himself for love! and was in his youth a bold Intriguer, and a gay Companion!

Enter FAG.

Fag. Assuredly, Sir, our Father is wrath to a degree; he comes down stairs eight or ten steps at a time—muttering, growling, and thumping the bannisters all the way: I, and the Cook's dog, stand bowing at the door—rap! he gives me a stroke on the head with his cane; bids me carry that to my master, then kicking the poor Turnspit into the area, d—ns us all, for a puppy triumvirate!—Upon my credit, Sir, were I in your place, and found my father such very bad company, I should certainly drop his acquaintance.

Abs. Cease your impertinence, Sir, at present.—Did you come in for nothing

thing more?——Stand out of the way!
[*Pushes him aside, and Exit.*

F A G, *solus.*

Fag. Soh! Sir Anthony trims my Master; He is afraid to reply to his Father—then vents his spleen on poor Fag!——When one is vexed by one person, to revenge one's self on another, who happens to come in the way—is the vilest injustice! Ah! it shews the worst temper——the basest——

Enter E R R A N D - B O Y.

Boy. Mr. Fag! Mr. Fag! your Master calls you.

Fag. Well, you little, dirty puppy, you need not baul so!——The meanest disposition! the——

Boy. Quick, quick, Mr. Fag.

Fag. *Quick, quick*, you impudent Jack-anapes! am I to be commanded by you too? you little, impertinent, insolent, kitchen-bred——

[*Exit, kicking and beating him.*

S C E N E II.

The N O R T H P A R A D E.

Enter L U C Y.

Lucy. So—I shall have another Rival to add to my mistress's list—Captain Absolute.

lute.—However, I shall not enter his name till my purse has received notice in form. Poor Acres is dismissed!—Well, I have done him a last friendly office, in letting him know that Beverley was here before him.—Sir Lucius is generally more punctual, when he expects to hear from his *dear Delia*, as he calls her:—I wonder he's not here!—I have a little scruple of conscience from this deceit; tho' I should not be paid so well, if my hero knew that *Delia* was near fifty, and her own mistress.—I could not have thought he would have been so nice, when there's a golden egg in the case, as to care whether he has it from a pullet or an old hen!

Enter Sir LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir Luc. Hah! my little embassadress—upon my conscience I have been looking for you; I have been on the South Parade this half-hour.

Lucy. [*Speaking simply*] O gemini! and I have been waiting for your worship here on the North.

Sir Luc. Faith!—may be, that was the reason we did not meet; and it is very comical too, how you could go out and I not see you—for I was only taking a nap at the Parade-Coffee-house, and I chose

chose the *window* on purpose that I might not miss you.

Lucy. My stars! Now I'd wager a sixpence I went by while you were asleep.

Sir Luc. Sure enough it must have been so—and I never dreamt it was so late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me?

Lucy. Yes, but I have:—I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

Sir Luc. O faith! I guessed you weren't come empty-handed—well—let me see what the dear creature says.

Lucy. There, Sir Lucius. [*Gives him a letter.*]

Sir Luc. [*Reads.*] "*Sir—there is often a sudden incentive impulse in love, that has a greater induction than years of domestic combination: such was the commotion I felt at the first superfluous view of Sir Lucius O' Trigger.*" Very pretty, upon my word. "*As my motive is interested, you may be assured my love shall never be miscellaneous.*" Very well. "*Female punctuation forbids me to say more; yet let me add, that it will give me joy infallible to find Sir Lucius worthy the last criterion of my affections.—Yours, while meretricious.—*DELIA."

Upon my conscience! Lucy, your lady is a great mistress of language.—Faith, she's quite the queen of the dictionary!—for the

the devil a word dare refuse coming at her call—tho' one would think it was quite out of hearing.

Lucy. Aye, Sir, a lady of her experience.

Sir Luc. Experience! what, at seventeen?

Lucy. O true, Sir—but then she reads so——my stars! how she will read off hand!

Sir Luc. Faith, she must be very deep read to write this way—tho' she is rather an arbitrary writer too—for here are a great many poor words pressed into the service of this note, that would get their *habeas corpus* from any court in Christendom.——However, when affection guides the pen, Lucy, he must be a brute who finds fault with the style.

Lucy. Ah! Sir Lucius, if you were to hear how she talks of you!

Sir Luc. O tell her, I'll make her the best husband in the world, and Lady O'Trigger into the bargain!—But we must get the old gentlewoman's consent—and do every thing fairly.

Lucy. Nay, Sir Lucius, I thought you wa'n't rich enough to be so nice!

Sir Luc. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it:—I am so poor that I can't afford to do a dirty action.—If I did not want money I'd steal your mistress and her fortune

fortune with a great deal of pleasure.—
However, my pretty girl, [*gives her money*]
here's a little something to buy you a rib-
band; and meet me in the evening, and
I'll give you an answer to this.—So, hussy,
take a kiss before hand, to put you in
mind. [*Kisses her.*]

Lucy. O lud! Sir Lucius—I never seed
such a gemman! My lady won't like you
if you're so impudent.

Sir Luc. Faith she will, Lucy——that
same——pho! what's the name of it?
——*Modesty!*——is a quality in a lover
more praised by the women than liked;
so, if your mistress asks you whether Sir
Lucius ever gave you a kiss, tell her *fifty*
——my dear.

Lucy. What, would you have me tell
her a lie?

Sir Luc. Ah then, you baggage! I'll
make it a truth presently.

Lucy. For shame now; here is some
one coming.

Sir Luc. O faith, I'll quiet your con-
science! [*Sees F A G.—Exit, humming a Tune.*]

Enter F A G.

Fag. So, so, Ma'am. I humbly beg
pardon.

Lucy. O lud!—now, Mr. Fag—you
flurry one so.

Fag. Come, come, Lucy, here's no one bye—so a little less simplicity, with a grain or two more sincerity, if you please——You play false with us, Madam.——I saw you give the Baronet a letter.——My Master shall know this—and if he don't call him out—I will.

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are so hasty.——That letter was from Mrs. Malaprop, simpleton.——She is taken with Sir Lucius's address.

Fag. What tastes some people have!——Why I suppose I have walked by her window an hundred times——But what says our young lady? Any message to my master?

Lucy. Sad news! Mr. Fag.—A worse Rival than Acres!—Sir Anthony Absolute has proposed his son.

Fag. What, Captain Absolute?

Lucy. Even so.—I overheard it all.

Fag. Ha! ha! ha!—very good, faith.—Good-bye, Lucy, I must away with this news.

Lucy. Well—you may laugh—but it is true, I assure you. [Going.
But—Mr. Fag—tell your master not to be cast down by this.

Fag.

Fag. O he'll be so disconsolate!

Luc. And charge him not to think of quarrelling with young Absolute.

Fag. Never fear!—never fear!

Lucy. Be sure—bid him keep up his spirits.

Fag. We will—we will.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III. S C E N E I.

*The NORTH PARADE.**Enter ABSOLUTE.*

'TIS just as Fag told me, indeed.—
 Whimsical enough, faith! My Father wants to *force* me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with!—
 He must not know of my connection with her yet a-while.—He has too summary a method of proceeding in these matters—and Lydia shall not yet lose her hopes of an elopement.—However, I'll read my recantation instantly.—My conversion is something sudden, indeed—but I can assure him it is very *sincere*.—
 —So, so—here he comes.—He looks plaguy gruff. [*Steps aside.*

Enter Sir ANTHONY.

No—I'll die sooner than forgive him.
 —*Die*, did I say? I'll live these fifty years to plague him.—At our last meeting, his impudence had almost put me out of temper.—An obstinate, passionate, self-willed boy!—Who can he take after? This is my return for getting him before all his brothers and sisters!—for putting him, at twelve years old, into a marching regi-

regiment, and allowing him fifty pounds a-year, beside his pay ever since!—But I have done with him;—he's any body's son for me.——I never will see him more,—never—never—never—never.

Abs. Now for a penitential face.

Sir Anth. Fellow, get out of my way.

Abs. Sir, you see a penitent before you.

Sir Anth. I see an impudent scoundrel before me.

Abs. A sincere penitent.——I am come, Sir, to acknowledge my error, and to submit entirely to your will.

Sir Anth. What's that?

Abs. I have been revolving, and reflecting, and considering on your past goodness, and kindness, and condescension to me.

Sir Anth. Well, Sir?

Abs. I have been likewise weighing and balancing what you were pleased to mention concerning duty, and obedience, and authority.

Sir Anth. Well, Puppy?

Abs. Why then, Sir, the result of my reflections is——a resolution to sacrifice every inclination of my own to your satisfaction.

Sir Anth. Why now, you talk sense—absolute sense—I never heard any thing more sensible in my life.——Confound you; you shall be *Jack* again.

Abf. I am happy in the appellation.

Sir Anth. Why, then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now inform you—who the lady really is.—Nothing but your passion and violence, you silly fellow, prevented my telling you at first. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and rapture—prepare. —What think you of Miss Lydia Languish?

Abf. Languish! What, the Languishes of Worcesterfhire?

Sir Anth. Worcesterfhire! No. Did you never meet Mrs. Malaprop and her Niece, Miss Languish, who came into our country just before you were last ordered to your regiment?

Abf. Malaprop! Languish! I don't remember ever to have heard the names before. Yet, stay—I think I do recollect something.—*Languish! Languish!* She squints, don't she?—A little, red-haired girl?

Sir Anth. Squints?—A red-haired girl!—Z—ds, no.

Abf. Then I must have forgot; it can't be the same person.

Sir Anth. Jack! Jack! what think you of blooming, love-breathing seventeen?

Abf. As to that, Sir, I am quite indifferent.—If I can please you in the matter, 'tis all I desire.

Sir

Sir Anth. Nay, but Jack, such eyes! such eyes! so innocently wild! so bashfully irresolute! Not a glance but speaks and kindles some thought of love! Then, Jack, her cheeks! her cheeks, Jack! so deeply blushing at the insinuations of her tell-tale eyes! Then, Jack, her lips!—O Jack, lips smiling at their own discretion; and if not smiling, more sweetly pouting; more lovely in fullness!

Abs. That's she indeed.—Well done, old gentleman!

Sir Anth. Then, Jack, her neck.—
O Jack! Jack!

Abs. And which is to be mine, Sir, the Niece or the Aunt?

Sir Anth. Why, you unfeeling, insensible Puppy, I despise you. When I was of your age, such a description would have made me fly like a racket! The Aunt, indeed!—Odds life! when I ran away with your mother, I would not have touched any thing old or ugly to gain an empire.

Abs. Not to please your father, Sir?

Sir Anth. To please my father!——
Z——ds! not to please——O my father!——Oddso!——yes—yes! if my father indeed had desired——that's quite another matter.——Tho' he wa'n't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

Abs. I dare say not, Sir.

Sir Anth. But, Jack, you are not sorry to find your mistress is so beautiful.

Sir Anth. Sir, I repeat it; if I please you in this affair, 'tis all I desire. Not that I think a woman the worse for being handsome; but, Sir, if you please to recollect, you before hinted something about a hump or two, one eye, and a few more graces of that kind—now, without being very nice, I own I should rather chuse a wife of mine to have the usual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back: and tho' *one* eye may be very agreeable, yet as the prejudice has always run in favour of *two*, I would not wish to affect a singularity in that article.

Sir Anth. What a phlegmatic sot it is! Why, firrah, you're an anchorite!—a vile insensible stock.—You a soldier!—you're a walking block, fit only to dust the company's regiment on!——Odds life! I've a great mind to marry the girl myself!

Abs. I am entirely at your disposal, Sir; if you should think of addressing Miss Languish yourself, I suppose you would have me marry the *Aunt*; or if you should change you're mind, and take the old lady—'tis the same to me—I'll marry the *Niece*.

Sir Anth. Upon my word, Jack, thou'rt either a very great hypocrite, or——but, come, I know your indifference on
such

such a subject must be all a lie—I'm sure it must—come, now—d—n your demure face!—come, confess, Jack—you have been lying—ha'n't you? You have been lying, hey? I'll never forgive you, if you ha'n't:—so now, own, my dear Jack, you have been playing the hypocrite, hey! —I'll never forgive you, if you ha'n't been lying and playing the hypocrite.

Abs. I'm sorry, Sir, that the respect and duty which I bear to you should be so mistaken.

Sir Anth. Hang your respect and duty! But, come along with me, I'll write a note to Mrs. Malaprop, and you shall visit the lady directly.

Abs. Where does she lodge, Sir?

Sir Anth. What a dull question!—only on the Grove here.

Abs. O! then I can call on her in my way to the coffee-house.

Sir Anth. In your way to the coffee-house! You'll set your heart down in your way to the coffee-house, hey? Ah! you leaden-nerv'd, wooden-hearted dolt! But come along, you shall see her directly; her eyes shall be the Promethian torch to you—come along, I'll never forgive you, if you don't come back, stark mad with rapture and impatience——if you don't, egad, I'll marry the girl myself! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

SCENE II.

JULIA'S Dressing-room.

FAULKLAND, *solus*.

Faulk. They told me Julia would return directly; wonder she is not yet come!—How mean does this captious, unsatisfied temper of mine appear to my cooler judgment! Yet I know not that I indulge it in any other point:—but on this one subject, and to this one object, whom I think I love beyond my life, I am ever ungenerously fretful, and madly capricious!—I am conscious of it—yet I cannot correct myself! What tender, honest joy sparkled in her eyes when we met!—How delicate was the warmth of her expressions!—I was ashamed to appear less happy—though I had come resolved to wear a face of coolness and upbraiding. Sir Anthony's presence prevented my proposed expostulations:—yet I must be satisfied that she has not been so *very* happy in my absence.—She is coming!—Yes!—I know the nimbleness of her tread, when she thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her stay.

Enter JULIA.

Jul. I had not hop'd to see you again so soon.

Faulk.

Faulk. Could I, Julia, be contented with my first welcome——restrained as we were by the presence of a third person?

Jul. O Faulkland, when your kindness can make me thus happy, let me not think that I discovered more coolness in your first salutation than my long-hoarded joy could have presaged.

Faulk. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia.—I *was* rejoiced to see you—to see you in such health——Sure I had no cause for coldness?

Jul. Nay then, I see you have taken something ill.——You must not conceal from me what it is.

Faulk. Well then——shall I own to you—but you will despise me, Julia—nay, I despise myself for it.——Yet I *will* own, that my joy at hearing of your health and arrival here, by your neighbour Acres, was something damped, by his dwelling much on the high spirits you had enjoyed in Devonshire——on your mirth—your singing——dancing, and I know not what!—For such is my temper, Julia, that I should regard every mirthful moment in your absence as a treason to constancy:—The mutual tear that steals down the cheek of parting lovers is a compact, that no smile shall live there till they meet again.

Jul.

Jul. Must I never cease to tax my Faulkland with this teasing minute caprice?—Can the idle reports of a silly boor weigh in your breast against my tried affection?

Faulk. They have no weight with me, Julia: no, no—I am happy if you have been so—yet only say, that you did not sing with *mirth*—say that you *thought* of Faulkland in the dance.

Jul. I never can be happy in your absence.—If I wear a countenance of content, it is to shew that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth.—If I seem'd sad—it were to make malice triumph; and say, that I had fixed my heart on one, who left me to lament his roving, and my own credulity.—Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not to upbraid you, when I say, that I have often dressed sorrow in smiles, lest my friends should guess whose unkindness had caused my tears.

Faulk. You were ever all goodness to me.—O, I am a brute, when I but admit a doubt of your true constancy!

Jul. If ever, without such cause from you, as I will not suppose possible, you find my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial scoff for levity, and base ingratitude.

Faulk.

Faulk. Ah! Julia, that *last* word is grating to me. I would I had no title to your *gratitude*! Search your heart, Julia; perhaps what you have mistaken for Love, is but the warm effusion of a too thankful heart!

Jul. For what quality must I love you?

Faulk. For no quality! To regard me for any quality of mind or understanding, were only to *esteem* me. And for person—I have often wish'd myself deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation *there* for any part of your affection.

Jul. Where Nature has bestowed a shew of nice attention in the features of a man, he should laugh at it, as misplaced. I have seen men, who in *this* vain article perhaps might rank above you; but my heart has never asked my eyes if it were so or not.

Faulk. Now this is not well from you, Julia—I despise person in a man——Yet if you lov'd me as I wish, though I were an Æthiop, you'd think none so fair.

Jul. I see you are determined to be unkind.—The *contract* which my poor father bound us in gives you more than a lover's privilege.

Faulk. Again, Julia, you raise ideas that feed and justify my doubts.——I would not have been more free—no—I am proud of my restraint.——Yet—yet—perhaps

perhaps your high respect alone for this solemn compact has fettered your inclinations, which else had made worthier choice.—How shall I be sure, had you remained unbound in thought and promise, that I should still have been the object of your persevering love?

Jul. Then try me now.—Let us be free as strangers as to what is past:—*my* heart will not feel more liberty!

Faulk. There now! so hasty, Julia! so anxious to be free!—If your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not loose your hold, even tho' I wish'd it!

Jul. O, you torture me to the heart! —I cannot bear it.

Faulk. I do not mean to distress you.—If I lov'd you less, I should never give you an uneasy moment.—But hear me.—All my fretful doubts arise from this—Women are not used to weigh, and separate the motives of their affections:—the cold dictates of prudence, gratitude, or filial duty, may sometimes be mistaken for the pleadings of the heart.—I would not boast—yet let me say, that I have neither age, person, or character, to found dislike on;—my fortune such as few ladies could be charged with *indiscretion* in the match.—O Julia! when *Love* receives such countenance from *Prudence*, nice minds will be suspicious of its *birth*.

Jul.

Jul. I know not whither your insinuations would tend:—as they seem pressing to insult me—I will spare you the regret of having done so.—I have given you no cause for this! *[Exit in Tears.*

Faulk. In Tears! stay, Julia: stay but for a moment.—The door is fastened!—Julia!—my soul—but for one moment:—I hear her sobbing!—'Sdeath! what a brute am I to use her thus! Yet stay.—Aye—she is coming now:—how little resolution there is in woman!—how a few soft words can turn them!—No, faith!—she is *not* coming either.—Why, Julia—my love—say but that you forgive me—come but to tell me that—now, this is being *too* resentful:—stay! she is coming too—I thought she would—no *steadiness* in any thing! her going away must have been a mere trick then—she sha'n't see that I was hurt by it.—I'll affect indifference—*[hum a tune: then listens]*—No—Z—ds! she's *not* coming!—nor don't intend it, I suppose.—This is not *steadiness*, but *obstinacy*! Yet I deserve it—What, after so long an absence, to quarrel with her tenderness!—'twas barbarous and unmanly!—I should be ashamed to see her now.—I'll wait till her just resentment is abated—and when I distress her so again, may I lose her for ever! and be linked instead to
some

some antique virago, whose knawing passions, and long-hoarded spleen, shall make me curse my folly half the day, and all the night! [Exit]

SCENE III.

Mrs. MALAPROP'S Lodgings.

Mrs. MALAPROP, and Captain ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. Mal. Your being Sir Anthony's son, Captain, would itself be a sufficient accommodation;—but from the ingenuity of your appearance, I am convinced you deserve the character here given of you.

Abs. Permit me to say, Madam, that as I never yet have had the pleasure of seeing Miss Languish, my principal inducement in this affair at present, is the honour of being allied to Mrs. Malaprop; of whose intellectual accomplishments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is silent.

Mrs. Mal. Sir, you do me infinite honour!—I beg, Captain, you'll be seated.—[Sit]—Ah! few gentlemen, now a days, know how to value the ineffectual qualities in a woman! few think how a little knowledge become a gentlewoman! Men have no sense now but for the worthless flower, beauty!

Abs.

Abs. It is but too true indeed, Ma'am;—yet I fear our ladies should share the blame——they think our admiration of *beauty* so great, that *knowledge* in *them* would be superfluous. Thus, like garden-trees, they seldom shew fruits, till time has robb'd them of the more specious blossom.—Few, like Mrs. Malaprop and the Orange-tree, are rich in both at once!

Mrs. Mal. Sir—you overpower me with good-breeding.——He is the very Pine-apple of politeness! [*Aside.*] You are not ignorant, Captain, that this giddy girl has somehow contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, strolling, eve's-dropping Ensign, whom none of us have seen, and nobody knows any thing of.

Abs. O, I have heard the silly affair before.—I'm not at all prejudiced against her on *that* account.

Mrs. Mal. You are very good, and very considerate, Captain.—I am sure I have done every thing in my power since I exploded the affair! long ago I laid my positive conjunction on her never to think on the fellow again;—I have since laid Sir Anthony's preposition before her;—but I'm sorry to say she seems resolved to decline every particle that I enjoin her.

Abs. It must be very distressing indeed, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. It gives me the hydrostatics to such a degree!—I thought she had persisted from corresponding with him; but behold this very day, I have interceded another letter from the fellow! I believe I have it in my pocket.

Abs. O the devil! my last note. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Mal. Aye, here it is.

Abs. Aye, my note indeed! O the little traitress Lucy. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Mal. There, perhaps you may know the writing. [*Gives him the letter.*

Abs. I think I have seen the hand before—yes, I *certainly must* have seen this hand before:—

Mrs. Mal. Nay, but read it, Captain.

Abs. [*Reads*] “*My soul's idol, my ador'd Lydia!*”—Very tender indeed!

Mrs. Mal. Tender! aye, and prophane too, o' my conscience!

Abs. “*I am excessively alarmed at the intelligence you send me, the more so as my new rival*”—

Mrs. Mal. That's you, Sir. “*has universally the character of being an accomplished gentleman, and a man of honour.*”—Well, that's handsome enough.

Mrs. Mal. O, the fellow had some design in writing so—

Abs. That he had, I'll answer for him, Ma'am.

Mrs.

Mrs. Mal. But go on, Sir—you'll see presently.

Abs. "As for the old weather-beaten she-
"dragon who guards you,"—Who can he mean by that?

Mrs. Mal. Me, Sir—*me*—he means *me* there—what do you think now?—but go on a little further.

Abs. Impudent scoundrel!—"it shall go
"hard but I will elude her vigilance, as I
"am told that the same ridiculous vanity,
"which makes her dress up her coarse fea-
"tures, and deck her dull chat with hard
"words which she don't understand"——

Mrs. Mal. There, Sir! an attack upon my language! what do you think of that?—an aspersion upon my parts of speech! was ever such a brute! save if I reprehend any thing in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs!

Abs. He deserves to be hang'd and quartered, let me see—"same ridiculous
"vanity"——

Mrs. Mal. You need not read it again, Sir.

Abs. I beg pardon, Ma'am "does also
"lay her open to the grossest deceptions from
"flattery and pretended admiration"—an impudent coxcomb! "so that I have a
"scheme to see you shortly with the old Har-
"ridan's consent, and even to make her a

"go-between in our interviews."——Was ever such assurance.

Mrs. Mal. Did you ever hear any thing like it?—he'll elude my vigilance, will he?—yes, yes! ha! ha! he's very likely to enter these floors!—we'll try who can plot best!

Abs. Ha! ha! ha! a conceited puppy, ha! ha! ha!——Well, but Mrs. Malaprop, as the girl seems so infatuated by this fellow, suppose you were to wink at her corresponding with him for a little time—let her even plot an elopement with him—then do you connive at her escape—while I, just in the nick, will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his stead.

Mrs. Mal. I am delighted with the scheme, never was any thing better perpetrated!

Abs. But, pray, could not I see the lady for a few minutes now?——I should like to try her temper a little.

Mrs. Mal. Why, I don't know——I doubt she is not prepared for a first visit of this kind.——There is a decorum in these matters.

Abs. O Lord! she won't mind *me*—only tell her Beverley——

Mrs. Mal. Sir!——

Abs. Gently, good tongue. [Aside.

Mrs. Mal. What did you say of Beverley?

Abs.

Abf. O, I was going to propose that you should tell her, by way of jest, that it was Beverley who was below—she'd come down fast enough then—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Mal. 'Twould be a trick she well-deserves—besides you know the fellow tells her he'll get my consent to see her—ha! ha!—Let him if he can, I say again.—Lydia, come down here! [*Calling.*—He'll make me a *go-between* in their interviews!—ha! ha! ha! Come down, I say, Lydia!—I don't wonder at your laughing, ha! ha! ha! his impudence is truly ridiculous.

Abf. 'Tis very ridiculous, upon my soul, Ma'am, ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Mal. The little hussy won't hear.—Well, I'll go and tell her at once who it is—she shall know that Capt. Absolute is come to wait on her.—And I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman.

Abf. As you please, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. For the present, Captain, your servant.—Ah! you've not done laughing yet, I see—*elude my vigilance!* yes, yes, ha! ha! ha! [*Exit.*

Abf. Ha! ha! ha! one would think now that I might throw off all disguise at once, and seize my prize with security—but such is Lydia's caprice, that to undeceive

were probably to lose her.—I'll see whether she knows me.

[Walks aside, and seems engaged in looking at the pictures.]

Enter LYDIA.

Lyd. What a scene am I now to go thro'! surely nothing can be more dreadful than to be obliged to listen to the loathsome addresses of a stranger to one's heart.—I have heard of girls persecuted as I am, who have appealed in behalf of their favoured lover to the generosity of his rival: suppose I were to try it—there stands the hated rival—an officer too!—but O how unlike my Beverley!—I wonder he don't begin—truly he seems a very negligent wooer!—quite at his ease, upon my word! I'll speak first—Mr. Absolute.

Abs. Madam. *[Turns round.]*

Lyd. O Heav'ns! Beverley!

Abs. Hush!—hush, my life!—softly! be not surprised!

Lyd. I am so astonished! and so terrified! and so overjoy'd!—for Heav'n's sake! how came you here?

Abs. Briefly—I have deceived your Aunt—I was informed that my new rival was to visit here this evening, and contriving to have him kept away, have passed myself on *her* for Capt. Absolute.

Lyd.

Lyd. O, charming!—And she really takes you for young Absolute?

Abs. O, she's convinced of it.

Lyd. Ha! ha! ha! I can't forbear laughing to think how her sagacity is overreached!

Abs. But we trifle with our precious moments—such another opportunity may not occur—then let me now conjure my kind, my condescending angel, to fix the time when I may rescue her from undeserved persecution, and with a licensed warmth plead for my reward.

Lyd. Will you then, Beverley, consent to forfeit that portion of my paltry wealth?—that burthen on the wings of love?

Abs. O come to me—rich only thus—in loveliness—Bring no portion to me but thy love—'twill be generous in you, Lydia—for well you know, it is the only dower your poor Beverley can repay.

Lyd. How persuasive are his words!—how charming will poverty be with him!

Abs. Ah! my soul, what a life will we then live? Love shall be our idol and support! we will worship him with a monastic strictness; abjuring all worldly toys, to center every thought and action there.—Proud of calamity, we will enjoy the wreck of wealth; while the surrounding

gloom of adversity shall make the flame of our pure love show doubly bright.— By Heav'ns! I would fling all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand to enjoy the scene where I might clasp my Lydia to my bosom, and say, the world affords no smile to me—but here——

[*Embracing her.*
If she holds out now the devil is in it!

[*Aside.*
Lyd. Now could I fly with him to the Antipodes! but my persecution is not yet come to a crisis. [*Aside.*

Enter Mrs. MALAPROP, listening.

Mrs. Mal. I'm impatient to know how the little huzzy deports herself. [*Aside.*

Abs. So pensive, Lydia!—is then your warmth abated?

Mrs. Mal. *Warmth abated!*—so!—she has been in a passion, I suppose.

Lyd. No—nor ever can while I have life.

Mrs. Mal. An ill-temper'd little devil!—She'll be in a passion all her life—will she?

Lyd. Think not the idle threats of my ridiculous aunt can ever have any weight with me.

Mrs. Mal. Very dutiful, upon my word!

Lyd. Let her choice be *Capt. Absolute*, but *Beverley* is mine.

Mrs.

Mrs. Mal. I am astonished at her assurance!—*to his face—this to his face!*

Abs. Thus then let me enforce my suit.
[*Kneeling.*

Mrs. Mal. Aye—poor young man!—down on his knees entreating for pity!—I can contain no longer.—Why, huzzy! huzzy!—I have overheard you.

Abs. O confound her vigilance! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Mal. Capt. Absolute—I know not how to apologize for her shocking rudeness.

Abs. So—all's safe, I find. [*Aside.*
I have hopes, Madam, that time will bring the young lady——

Mrs. Mal. O, there's nothing to be hoped for from her! she's as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of Nile.

Lyd. Nay, Madam, what do you charge me with now?

Mrs. Mal. Why, thou unblushing rebel—didn't you tell this gentleman to his face that you loved another better?—didn't you say you never would be his?

Lyd. No, Madam—I did not.

Mrs. Mal. Good Heav'ns! what assurance!—Lydia, Lydia, you ought to know that lying don't become a young woman!—Didn't you boast that Beverley—that stroller Beverley, possessed your heart?—Tell me that, I say.

Lyd. 'Tis true, Ma'am, and none but Beverley—

Mrs.

Mrs. Mal. Hold;—hold Assurance!—you shall not be so rude.

Abs. Nay, pray Mrs. Malaprop, don't stop the young lady's speech:—she's very welcome to talk thus—it does not hurt *me* in the least, I assure you.

Mrs. Mal. You are *too* good, Captain—*too* amiably patient—but come with me, Miss—let us see you again soon, Captain—remember what we have fixed.

Abs. I shall, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. Come, take a graceful leave of the gentleman.

Lyd. May every blessing wait on my Beverley, my lov'd Bev——

Mrs. Mal. Huzzy! I'll choak the word in your throat!——come along—come along. [*Exeunt severally.*

[*BEVERLEY* kissing his hand to
LYDIA—*Mrs. MALAPROP*
stopping her from speaking.

SCENE V. *ACRES's lodgings.*

ACRES and *DAVID*.

ACRES as just dress'd.

Acres. Indeed, David—do you think I become it so?

Dav. You are quite another creature, believe me Master, by the Mass! an' we've any luck we shall see the Devon monkeyrny in all the printshops in Bath!

Acres.

Acres. Dress does make a difference, David.

Dav. 'Tis all in all, I think—difference! why, an' you were to go now to Clod-Hall, I am certain the old lady wouldn't know you: Master Butler wouldn't believe his own eyes, and Mrs. Pickle would cry, "Lard presarve me!" our dairy-maid would come giggling to the door, and I warrant Dolly Tetter, your Honour's favourite, would blush like my waistcoat.—Oons! I'll hold a gallon, there an't a dog in the house but would bark, and I question whether *Phillis* would wag a hair of her tail!

Acres. Aye, David, there's nothing like *polishing*.

Dav. So I says of your Honour's boots; but the boy never heeds me!

Acres. But, David, has Mr. De-la-Grace been here? I must rub up my balancing, and chafing, and boring.

Dav. I'll call again, Sir.

Acres. Do—and see if there are any letters for me at the post-office.

Dav. I will.—By the Mass, I can't help looking at your head!—if I hadn't been by at the cooking, I wish I may die if I should have known the dish again myself!

[Exit.

[ACRES comes forward, practising a dancing step.

Acres.

Acres. Sink, slide—coupee—Confound the first inventors of cotillons! say I— they are as bad as algebra to us country gentlemen——I can walk a Minuet easy enough when I'm forced!—and I have been accounted a good stick in a Country-dance.—Odd's jigs and tabors!—I never valued your cross-over two couple—figure in—right and left—and I'd foot it with e'er a captain in the country!—but these outlandish heathen Allemandes and Cotillons are quite beyond me!—I shall never prosper at 'em, that's sure—mine are true-born English legs—they don't understand their curst French lingo!—their *Pas* this, and *Pas* that, and *Pas* t'other!—d—n me, my feet don't like to be called Paws! no, 'tis certain I have most Antigallican Toes!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, Sir.

Acres. Shew him in.

Enter Sir LUCIUS.

Sir Luc. Mr. Acres, I am delighted to embrace you.

Acres. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

Sir Luc. Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

Acres.

Acres. Faith! I have followed Cupid's Jack-a-Lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last.—In short, I have been very ill-used, Sir Lucius.—I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as on a very ill-used gentleman.

Sir Luc. Pray, what is the case?—I ask no names.

Acres. Mark me, Sir Lucius, I fall as deep as need be in love with a young lady——her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—send word of my arrival; and receive answer, that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of.—This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

Sir Luc. Very ill, upon my conscience—Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

Acres. Why, there's the matter: she has another lover, *one* Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath.—Odds flanders and lies! he must be at the bottom of it.

Sir Luc. A rival in the case, is there?—and you think he has supplanted you unfairly.

Acres. Unfairly!—to be sure he has.—He never could have done it fairly.

Sir Luc. Then sure you know what is to be done!

Acres. Not I, upon my soul!

Sir Luc. We wear no swords here, but you understand me.

Acres. What! fight him!

Sir

Sir Luc. Aye, to be sure: what can I mean else?

Acres. But he has given me no provocation.

Sir Luc. Now, I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world. — Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another than to fall in love with the same woman? O, by my soul, it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship!

Acres. Breach of friendship! Aye, aye; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in my life.

Sir Luc. That's no argument at all—he has the less right then to take such a liberty.

Acres. 'Gad that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius!—I fire apace! Odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valour in him, and not know it! But couldn't I contrive to have a little right of my side?

Sir Luc. What the d——l signifies *right*, when your *honour* is concerned? Do you think *Achilles*, or my little *Alexander the Great* ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broadswords, and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

Acres. Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must

must be catching!—I certainly do feel a kind of valour rising as it were——a kind of courage, as I may say——Odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

Sir Luc. Ah, my little friend! if we had *Blunderbuss-Hall* here—I could shew you a range of ancestry, in the O'Trigger line, that would furnish the new room; every one of whom had killed his man!——For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipped through my fingers, I thank God our honour, and the family-pictures, are as fresh as ever.

Acres. O Sir Lucius! I have had ancestors too! every man of 'em colonel or captain in the militia?——Odds balls and barrels! say no more—I'm brac'd for it—my nerves are become catgut! my sinews wire! and my heart Pinchbeck! The thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast!——Z—ds! as the man in the play says, “I could do such deeds!”

Sir Luc. Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case—these things should always be done civilly.

Acres. I must be in a passion, Sir Lucius——I must be in a rage——Dear Sir Lucius let me be in a rage, if you love me.——Come, here's pen and paper. [*Sits down to write.*] I would the ink were red!——Indite, I say, indite!——How shall

shall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good *bold hand*, however.

—*Sir Luc.* Pray compose yourself.

—*Acres.* Come—now shall I begin with an oath? Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a damme.

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! do the thing *decently* and like a Christian. Begin now, —“*Sir*——

Acres. That's too civil by half.

Sir Luc. “*To prevent the confusion that might arise.*”

—*Acres.* Well——

Sir Luc. “*From our both addressing the same lady.*”

Acres. Aye—there's the reason—“*same lady*”—Well——

—*Sir Luc.* “*I shall expect the honour of your company*”——

Acres. Z——ds! I'm not asking him to dinner.

Sir Luc. Pray be easy.

Acres. Well then, “honour of your company.”

Sir Luc. “*To settle our pretensions.*”

Acres. Well.

Sir Luc. Let me see, aye, *King's Mead-fields* will do.——“*In King's Mead-fields.*”

Acres. So that's done.——Well, I'll fold it up presently; my own crest—a hand and dagger shall be the seal.

Sir Luc. You see now this little explanation will put a stop at once to all confusion

fusion or misunderstanding that might arise between you.

Acres. Aye, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

Sir Luc. Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time.—Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening if you can; then let the worst come of it, 'twill be off your mind to-morrow.

Acres. Very true.

Sir Luc. So I shall see nothing more of you, unless it be by letter, till the evening.—I would do myself the honour to carry your message; but, to tell you a secret, I believe I shall have just such another affair on my own hands. There is a gay captain here, who put a jest on me lately, at the expence of my country, and I only want to fall in with the gentleman, to call him out.

Acres. By my valour, I should like to see you fight first! Odds life! I should like to see you kill him, if it was only to get a little lesson.

Sir Luc. I shall be very proud of instructing you.—Well for the present—but remember now, when you meet your antagonist, do every thing in a mild and agreeable manner.—Let your courage be as keen, but at the same time as polished as your sword. [*Exeunt severally.*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

ACRES'S Lodgings.

ACRES and DAVID.

David. **T**HEN, by the Mafs, Sir! I would do no fuch thing—ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom fhould make me fight, when I wa'n't fo minded. Oons! what will the old lady fay, when fhe hears o't!

Acres. Ah! David, if you had heard Sir Lucius!—Odds farks and flames! he would have rous'd your valour.

David. Not he, indeed. I hates fuch blood-thirfty cormorants. Look'ee, Mafter, if you'd wanted a bout at boxing, quarter-ftaff, or fhort-ftaff, I fhould never be the man to bid you cry off: But for your curft fharps and snaps, I never knew any good come of 'em.

Acres. But my *honour*, David, my *honour*! I must be very careful of my *honour*.

David. Aye, by the Mafs! and I would be very careful of it; and I think in return my *honour* couldn't do lefs than to be very careful of *me*.

Acres. Odds blades! David, no gentleman will ever risk the lofs of his honour!

David.

David. I say then, it would be but civil in *honour* never to risk the loss of the gentleman.——Looke, Master, this *honour* seems to me to be a marvellous false friend; aye, truly, a very courtier-like servant.——Put the case, I was a gentleman, which, thank God, no one can say of me; well—my honour makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance.——So—we fight. Pleasant enough that, Boh!——I kill him—, the more's my luck. Now, pray who gets the profit of it?—Why, my *honour*.——But put the case that he kills me!——by the Mass! I go to the worms, and my honour whips over to my enemy!

Acres. No, David—in that case!—Odds crowns and laurels! your honour follows you to the grave.

David. Now, that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

Acres. Z——ds, David! you're a coward!—It doesn't become my valour to listen to you.——What, shall I disgrace my ancestors?—Think of that, David—think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors!

David. Under favour, the surest way of not disgracing them, is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look'ee now, Master, to go to them in such haste—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I

should think might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks; but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with.

Acres. But David, now, you don't think there is such very, very, *very* great danger, hey?——Odds life! people often fight without any mischief done!

David. By the Mass, I think 'tis ten to one against you!——Oons! here to meet some lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his d——n'd double-barrell'd swords, and cut and thrust pistols! Lord bless us! it makes me tremble to think o't!——Those be such desperate bloody-minded weapons! Well, I never could abide 'em!—from a child I never could fancy 'em!—I suppose there a'n't so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol!

Acres. Z——ds! I *won't* be afraid——Odds fire and fury! you shan't make me afraid.——Here is the challenge, and I have sent for my dear friend Jack Absolute to carry it for me.

David. Aye, I the name of mischief, let *him* be the messenger.—For my part, I wouldn't lend a hand to it for the best horse in your stable. By the Mass! it don't look like another letter!—It is, as I may say, a designing and malicious-looking letter!—and I warrant smells of gun-
powder

powder like a soldier's pouch!—Oons! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off!

Acres. Out, you poltroon!—you ha'n't the valour of a grafs-hopper.

David. Well, I say no more—'twill be sad news, to be sure, at Clod-Hall!—but I ha' done.—How Phyllis will howl when she hears of it!—Aye, poor bitch, she little thinks what shooting her Master's going after!——And I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honour, field and road, these ten years, will curse the hour he was born. [*Whimpering.*]

Acres. It won't do, David—I am determined to fight—so get along, you Coward, while I'm in the mind.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Captain Absolute, Sir.

Acres. O! shew him up.

[*Exit SERVANT.*]

David. Well, Heaven send we be all alive this time to-morrow.

Acres. What's that!——Don't provoke me, David!

David. Good bye, Master. [*Whimpering.*]

Acres. Get along, you cowardly, dastardly, croaking raven. [*Exit DAVID.*]

Enter ABSOLUTE.

Abs. What's the matter, Bob?

Acres. A vile, sheep-hearted block-head!——If I hadn't the valour of St. George and the dragon to boot——

Abs. But what did you want with me, Bob?

Acres. O!—There — [*Gives him the challenge.*]

Abs. “*To Ensign Beverley.*” So—what's going on now! [*Aside.* Well, what's this?

Acres. A challenge!

Abs. Indeed!——Why, you won't fight him; will you, Bob?

Acres. 'Egad but I will, Jack.——Sir Lucius has wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage—and I'll fight this evening, that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

Abs. But what have I to do with this?

Acres. Why, as I think you know something of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal defiance.

Abs. Well, give it to me, and trust me he gets it.

Acres. Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

Abs. Not in the least—I beg you won't mention it.—No trouble in the world, I assure you.

Acres.

Acres. You are very kind.—What it is to have a friend!—You couldn't be my second—could you, Jack?

Abs. Why no, Bob—not in *this* affair—it would not be quite so proper.

Acres. Well then I must fix on my friend Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack.

Abs. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the Captain.

Abs. I'll come instantly.—Well, my little hero, success attend you. [*Going.*

Acres. Stay—stay, Jack.—If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do, tell him I am a devil of a fellow—will you, Jack?

Abs. To be sure I shall.—I'll say you are a determined dog—hey, Bob!

Acres. Aye, do, do—and if that frightens him, 'egad perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week; will you, Jack?

Abs. I will, I will; I'll say you are call'd in the country "*Fighting Bob!*"

Acres. Right, right—'tis all to prevent mischief; for I don't want to take his life if I clear my honour.

Abs. No!—that's very kind of you.

Acres. Why, you don't wish me to kill him—do you, Jack?

Abs. No, upon my soul, I do not.—But a devil of a fellow, hey? [*Going.*

Acres. True, true—but stay—stay, Jack—you may add that you never saw me in such a rage before—a most devouring rage!

Abs. I will, I will.

Acres. Remember, Jack—a determined dog!

Abs. Aye, aye, “*Fighting Bob!*”

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

Mrs. MALAPROP'S Lodgings.

Mrs. MALAPROP and LYDIA.

Mrs. Mal. Why, thou perverse one!—tell me what you can object to him?—Isn't he a handsome man?—tell me that.—A genteel man? a pretty figure of a man?

Lyd. She little thinks whom she is praising! [*aside*]—So is Beverley, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. No caparisons, Miss, if you please!—Caparisons don't become a young woman.—No! Captain Absolute is indeed a fine gentleman!

Lyd. Aye, the Captain Absolute you have seen.

[*Aside.*
Mrs.

Mrs. Mal. Then he's *so* well bred;—*so* full of alacrity, and adulation!—and has *so much* to say for himself:—in such good language too!—His physiognomy *so* grammatical!—Then his presence is *so* noble!—I protest, when I saw him, I thought of what Hamlet says in the Play:—“*Hesperian curls!*—the front of *Job* himself!
“—an eye, like *March*, to threaten at
“command!—a Station, like Harry Mer-
“cury, new—” Something about kissing—on a hill——however, the similitude struck me directly.

Lyd. How enraged she'll be presently when she discovers her mistake! [*Aside.*

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir Anthony, and Captain Absolute are below Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. Shew them up here.

[*Exit SERVANT.*

Now, Lydia, I insist on your behaving as becomes a young woman.—Shew your good breeding at least, though you have forgot your duty.

Lyd. Madam, I have told you my resolution;—I shall not only give him no encouragement, but I won't even speak to, or look at him.

[*Flings herself into a chair, with her face from the door.*

Enter

Enter Sir ANTHONY and ABSOLUTE.

Sir Anth. Here we are, Mrs. Malaprop; come to mitigate the frowns of unrelenting beauty—and difficulty enough I had to bring this fellow.—I don't know what's the matter; but if I hadn't held him by force, he'd have given me the slip.

Mrs. Mal. You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in the affair.—I am ashamed for the cause! Lydia, Lydia, rise I beseech you!—pay your respects!

[Aside to her.]

Sir Anth. I hope, Madam, that Miss Languish has reflected on the worth of this gentleman, and the regard due to her Aunt's choice, and *my* alliance.—Now, Jack, speak to her! *[Aside to him.]*

Abs. What the d—! shall I do!—*[Aside]*—You see, Sir, she won't even look at me, whilst you are here.—I knew she wouldn't!—I told you so—Let me intreat you, Sir, to leave us together!

[ABSOLUTE seems to expostulate with his Father.]

Lyd. *[Aside.]* I wonder I ha'n't heard my Aunt exclaim yet! sure she can't have look'd at him!—perhaps their regimentals are alike, and she is something blind.

Sir Anth. I say, Sir, I won't stir a foot yet.

Mrs. Mal. I am sorry to say, Sir Anthony, that my affluence over my Niece
is

is very small.—Turn round Lydia, I blush for you! [*Aside to her.*]

Sir Anth. May I not flatter myself that Miss Languish will assign what cause of dislike she can have to my son!—Why don't you begin, Jack?—Speak, you puppy—speak! [*Aside to him.*]

Mrs. Mal. It is impossible, Sir Anthony, she can have any.—She will not say she has.—Answer, hussy! why don't you answer? [*Aside to her.*]

Sir Anth. Then, Madam, I trust that a childish and hasty predilection will be no bar to Jack's happiness.—Z—ds! firrah! why don't you speak? [*Aside to him.*]

Lyd. [*Aside.*] I think my lover seems as little inclined to conversation as myself.—How strangely blind my Aunt is!

Abs. Hem! hem!—Madam—hem! [*ABSOLUTE attempts to speak, then returns to Sir ANTHONY*—Faith! Sir, I am so confounded!—and so—so—confused!—I told you I should be so, Sir,—I knew it.—The-the-tremor of my passion, entirely takes away my presence of mind.

Sir Anth. But it don't take away your voice, fool, does it?—Go up, and speak to her directly! [*ABS. makes signs to Mrs. MAL. to leave them together.*]

Mrs. Mal. Sir Anthony, shall we leave them together?—Ah! you stubborn, little vixen!

[*Aside to her.*]

Sir

Sir Anth. Not yet, Ma'am, not yet!—
what the d—l are you at? unlock your
jaws, firrah, or— [*Aside to him.*

[*ABSOLUTE draws near LYDIA.*]

Abs. Now Heav'n send she may be too
fullen to look round!—I must disguise my
voice—[*Aside*]—

[*Speaks in a low hoarse tone.*
—Will not Miss Languish lend an ear to
the mild accents of true love?—Will
not—

Sir Anth. What the d—l ails the fellow?
—Why don't you speak out?—not stand
croaking like a frog in a quinsy!

Abs. The—the—excess of my awe,
and my—my—my modesty, quite choak
me!

Sir Anth. Ah! your *modesty* again!—I'll
tell you what, Jack; if you don't speak
out directly, and glibly too, I shall be in
such a rage!—Mrs. Malaprop, I wish the
lady would favour us with something
more than a side-front!

[*Mrs. MALAPROP seems to chide LYDIA.*

Abs. So!—all will out I see!
[*Goes up to LYDIA, speaks softly.*
Be not surpris'd, my Lydia, suppress all
surprise at present.

Lyd. [*Aside*] Heav'ns! 'tis Beverley's
voice!—Sure he can't have impos'd on Sir
Anthony too!—

[*Looks round by degrees, then starts up.*
Is

Is this possible!—my Beverley!—how can this be?—my Beverley?

Abs. Ah! 'tis all over. [*Aside.*

Sir Anth. Beverley!—the devil—Beverley!—What can the girl mean?—This is my son, Jack Absolute!

Mrs. Mal. For shame, hussy! for shame!—your head runs so on that fellow, that you have him always in your eyes!—beg Captain Absolute's pardon directly.

Lyd. I see no Captain Absolute, but my lov'd Beverley!

Sir Anth. Z—ds! the girl's mad!—her brain's turn'd by reading!

Mrs. Mal. O' my conscience, I believe so!—what do you mean by Beverley, hussy?—You saw Captain Absolute before to-day; there he is—your husband that shall be.

Lyd. With all my soul, Ma'am—when I refuse my Beverley——

Sir Anth. O! she's as mad as Bedlam!—or has this fellow been playing us a rogue's trick!—Come here, sirrah! who the d—l are you?

Abs. Faith, Sir, I am not quite clear myself; but I'll endeavour to recollect.

Sir Anth. Are you my son, or not?—answer for your mother, you dog, if you won't for me.

Mrs. Mal. Aye, Sir, who are you? O mercy! I begin to suspect!—

Abs.

Abs. Ye Powers of Impudence befriend me! [*Aside*] Sir Anthony, most assuredly I am your wife's son; and that I sincerely believe myself to be *your's* also, I hope my duty has always shewn.—Mrs. Malaprop, I am your most respectful admirer—and shall be proud to add *affectionate nephew*.—I need not tell my Lydia, that she sees her faithful Beverley, who, knowing the singular generosity of her temper, assum'd that name, and a station, which has proved a test of the most disinterested love, which he now hopes to enjoy in a more elevated character.

Lyd. So!—there will be no elopement after all! [*sullenly.*]

Sir Anth. Upon my soul, Jack, thou art a very impudent fellow! to do you justice, I think I never saw a piece of more consummate assurance!

Abs. O, you flatter me, Sir—you compliment—'tis my *modesty* you know, Sir—my *modesty* that has stood in my way.

Sir Anth. Well, I am glad you are not the dull, insensible varlet you pretended to be, however!—I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog—I am.—So this was your *penitence*, your *duty*, and *obedience*!—I thought it was d—n'd sudden!—You *never heard their names before*, not you!—*What, Languishes of Worcestershire*, hey?—if you
could

could please me in the affair, 'twas all you desired!—Ah! you dissembling villain!—What! [*pointing to LYDIA*] *she squints, don't she?*—a little red-hair'd girl!—hey?—Why, you hypocritical young rascal—I wonder you a'n't ashamed to hold up your head!

Abs. 'Tis with difficulty, Sir——I am confus'd—very much confus'd, as you must perceive.

Mrs. Mal. O Lud! Sir Anthony!—a new light breaks in upon me!——hey! how! what! Captain, did *you* write the letters then?—What!—I am to thank *you* for the elegant compilation of “*an old weather-beaten she-dragon*”—hey?——O mercy!—was it *you* that reflected on my parts of speech?

Abs. Dear Sir! my modesty will be overpower'd at last, if you don't assist me.—I shall certainly not be able to stand it!

Sir Anth. Come, come, Mrs. Malaprop, we must forget and forgive;—odds'life! matters have taken so clever a turn all of a sudden, that I could find in my heart, to be so good-humour'd! and so gallant!—hey! Mrs. Malaprop!

Mrs. Mal. Well, Sir Anthony, since *you* desire it, we will not anticipate the past;—so mind young people—our retrospection will now be all to the future.

Sir

Sir Anth. Come, we must leave them together; Mrs. Malaprop, they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant!—Jack—is'n't the *cheek* as I said, hey?—and the eye, you dog!—and the lip—hey? Come, Mrs. Malaprop, we'll not disturb their tenderness—their's is the time of life for happiness!——“*Youth's* “*the season made for joy*”—[*sings*]—hey!—Odds'life! I'm in such spirits,—I don't know what I couldn't do!—Permit me, Ma'am—[*gives his hand to Mrs. MAL.*] [*sings*] Tol-de-rol—'gad I should like a little fooling myself——Tol-de-rol! de-rol! [*Exit singing, and banding Mrs. MAL.*

[*LYDIA sits sullenly in her chair.*]

Abs. So much thought bodes me no good [*aside*]—So grave, Lydia!

Lyd. Sir!

Abs. So!—egad! I thought as much!—that d—n'd monosyllable has froze me! [*aside*]—What, Lydia, now that we are as happy in our *friends consent*, as in our *mutual vows*——

Lyd. *Friends consent*, indeed! [*peevishly.*]

Abs. Come, come, we must lay aside some of our romance—a little *wealth* and *comfort* may be endur'd after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers shall make such settlements as——

Lyd. *Lawyers!* I hate lawyers!

Abs.

Abs. Nay then, we will not wait for their lingering forms, but instantly procure the licence, and—

Lyd. The licence!—I hate licence!

Abs. O my Love! be not so unkind!—thus let me intreat—— [Kneeling.

Lyd. Pshaw!—what signifies kneeling, when you know I *must* have you?

Abs. [Rising] Nay, Madam, there shall be no constraint upon your inclinations, I promise you.—If I have lost your *heart*,—I resign the rest.—'Gad, I must try what a little *spirit* will do. [Aside.

Lyd. [Rising] Then, Sir, let me tell you, the interest you had there was acquired by a mean, unmanly imposition, and deserves the punishment of fraud.—What, you have been treating *me* like a *child*!—humouring my romance! and laughing, I suppose, at your success!

Abs. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me—only hear——

Lyd. So, while I fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flatter'd myself that I should outwit and incense them *all*—behold! my hopes are to be crush'd at once, by my Aunt's consent and approbation!—and I am *myself*, the only dupe at last! [Walking about in beat.

Abs. Nay, but hear me—

Lyd. No, Sir, you could not think that such paltry artifices could please me, when

the mask was thrown off!—But I suppose since your tricks have made you secure of my *fortune*, you are little solicitous about my *affections*.—But here, Sir, here is the picture—Beverley's picture! [*taking a miniature from her bosom*] which I have worn, night and day, in spite of threats and entreaties!—There, Sir, [*flings it to him*] and be assured I throw the original from my heart as easily!

Abs. Nay, nay, Ma'am, we will not differ as to that.—Here, [*taking out a picture*] here is Miss Lydia Languish—What a difference!—aye, *there* is the heav'nly assenting smile, that first gave soul and spirit to my hopes!—those are the lips which seal'd a vow, as yet scarce dry in Cupid's calendar!—and *there* the *half* resentful blush, that *would* have check'd the ardour of my thanks——Well, all that's past!—all over indeed!—There, Madam—in *beauty*, that copy is not equal to you, but in my mind it's merit over the original, in being still the same, is such—that—I cannot find in my heart to *part* with it. [*Puts it up again.*]

Lyd. [*Softening*] 'Tis your own doing, Sir—I, I, I suppose you are perfectly satisfied.

Abs. O, most certainly—sure now this is much better than being in love!—ha! ha! ha!—there's some spirit in *this*!——

What

What signifies breaking some scores of solemn promises, half an hundred vows, under one's hand, with the marks of a dozen or two angels to witness—all that's of no consequence you know.—To be sure people will say, that Miss didn't know her own mind—but never mind that:—or perhaps they may be ill-natured enough to hint, that the gentleman grew tired of the lady and forsook her—but don't let that fret you.

Lyd. There's no bearing his insolence.

[*Bursts into tears.*]

Enter Mrs. MALAPROP and Sir ANTHONY.

Mrs. Mal. [*Entering*] Come, we must interrupt your billing and cooing a while.

Lyd. This is worse than your treachery and deceit, you base ingrate! [*Sobbing.*]

Sir Anth. What the devil's the matter now!—Z—ds! Mrs. Malaprop, this is the oddest billing and cooing I ever heard!—but what the deuce is the meaning of it?—I'm quite astonish'd!

Abs. Ask the lady, Sir.

Mrs. Mal. O mercy!—I'm quite analys'd for my part!—why, Lydia, what is the reason of this?

Lyd. Ask the gentleman, Ma'am.

Sir Anth. Z——ds! I shall be in a phrenzy!—why Jack, you scoundrel,

you are not come out to be any one else, are you?

Mrs. Mal. Aye, Sir, there's no more *trick*, is there?—you are not like Cerberus, *three* Gentlemen at once, are you?

Abs. You'll not let me speak—I say the *lady* can account for *this* much better than I can.

Lyd. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverley again—*there* is the man—I now obey you:—for, from this moment, I renounce him for ever.

[Exit LYDIA.]

Mrs. Mal. O mercy! and miracles! what a turn here is—why fure, Captain, you haven't behaved disrespectfully to my Niece.

Sir Anth. Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—Ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—you have been too lively, Jack.

Abs. Nay, Sir, upon my word——

Sir Anth. Come, no lying, Jack—I'm fure 'twas so.

Mrs. Mal. O Lud! Sir Anthony!——O fie, Captain!

Abs. Upon my soul, Ma'am——

Sir Anth. Come, no excuses, Jack;—why, your father, you rogue, was so before you:—the blood of the Absolutes was always impatient.—Ha! ha! ha! poor little Lydia!—why, you've frighten'd her, you Dog, you have.

Abs.

Abs. By all that's good, Sir——

Sir Anth. Z—ds! say no more, I tell you.——Mrs. Malaprop shall make your peace.—You must make his peace, Mrs. Malaprop;—you must tell her 'tis Jack's way—tell her 'tis all our ways—it runs in the blood of our family!—Come, get on, Jack,—ha! ha! ha! Mrs. Malaprop—a young villain! [*Pushing him out.*

Mrs. Mal. O! Sir Anthony!——O fie, Captain! [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV.

The NORTH-PARADE.

Enter Sir LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir Luc. I wonder where this Capt. Absolute hides himself.——Upon my conscience!—these officers are always in one's way in love-affairs:—I remember I might have married Lady Dorothy Carmine, if it had not been for a little rogue of a Major, who ran away with her before she could get a sight of me!—And I wonder too what it is the ladies can see in them to be so fond of them—unless it be a touch of the old serpent in 'em, that makes the little creatures be caught, like vipers with a bit of red cloth.—Hah!—isn't this the Captain coming?—faith it is!——There is a probability of succeeding

about that fellow, that is mighty provoking!——Who the devil is he talking to? [Steps aside.

Enter Capt. ABSOLUTE.

Abs. To what fine purpose I have been plotting! a noble reward for all my schemes, upon my soul!—a little gypsey!—I did not think her romance could have made her so d—n'd absurd either——S'death, I never was in a worse humour in my life!—I could cut my own throat, or any other person's, with the greatest pleasure in the world!

Sir Luc. O, faith! I'm in the luck of it——I never could have found him in a sweeter temper for my purpose—to be sure I'm just come in the nick! now to enter into conversation with him, and so quarrel genteelly.

[*Sir LUCIUS goes up to ABSOLUTE.*
——With regard to that matter, Captain, I must beg leave to differ in opinion with you.

Abs. Upon my word then, you must be a very subtle disputant:—because, Sir, I happen'd just then to be giving no opinion at all.

Sir Luc. That's no reason.—For give me leave to tell you, a man may *think* an untruth as well as *speak* one.

Abs.

Abs. Very true, Sir, but if the man never utters his thoughts, I should think they *might* stand a *chance* of escaping controversy.

Sir Luc. Then, Sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the same thing.

Abs. Hark'ee, Sir Lucius,—if I had not before known you to be a gentleman, upon my soul, I should not have discovered it at this interview:—for what you can drive at, unless you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive!

Sir Luc. I humbly thank you, Sir, for the quickness of your apprehension,

[*Bowing.*
—you have nam'd the very thing I would be at.

Abs. Very well, Sir—I shall certainly not baulk your inclinations:—but I should be glad you would please to explain your motives.

Sr Luc. Pray, Sir, be easy—the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel as it stands—we should only spoil it, by trying to explain it.—However, your memory is very short—or you could not have forgot an affront you pass'd on me within this week.—So no more, but name your time and place.

Abs. Well, Sir, since you are so bent on it, the sooner the better;—let it be

this evening——here, by the Spring-Gardens.——We shall scarcely be interrupted.

Sir Luc. Faith! that same interruption in affairs of this nature, shews very great ill-breeding.——I don't know what's the reason, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets wind, people make such a pother, that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietness.—However, if it's the same to you, Captain, I should take it as a particular kindness, if you'd let us meet in King's-Mead-Fields, as a little business will call me there about six o'clock, and I may dispatch both matters at once.

Abs. 'Tis the same to me exactly.—A little after six, then we will discuss this matter more seriously.

Sir Luc. If you please, Sir, there will be very pretty small-sword light, tho' it won't do for a long shot.——So that matter's settled! and my mind's at ease.

[*Exit Sir LUCIUS.*

Enter FAULKLAND, meeting ABSOLUTE.

Abs. Well met.—I was going to look for you.—O, Faulkland! all the Demons of spite and disappointment have conspired against me! I'm so vex'd, that if I had not the prospect of a resource in being knock'd

knock'd o'the head by and bye, I should scarce have spirits to tell you the cause.

Faulk. What can you mean?—Has Lydia chang'd her mind?—I should have thought her duty and inclination would now have pointed to the same object.

Abs. Aye, just as the eyes do of a person who squints:—when her *love-eye* was fix'd on *me*—t'other—her *eye of duty*, was finely obliqued:—but when duty bid her point *that* the same way—off t'other turn'd on a swivel, and secured its retreat with a frown!

Faulk. But what's the resource you—

Abs. O, to wind up the whole, a good natured Irishman here has [*mimicking Sir Lucius*] beg'd leave to have the pleasure of cutting my throat—and I mean to indulge him—that's all.

Faulk. Prithee, be serious.

Abs. 'Tis fact, upon my soul.—Sir Lucius O'Trigger—you know him by sight—for some affront, which I am sure I never intended, has obliged me to meet him this evening at six o'clock:—'tis on that account I wish'd to see you—you must go with me.

Faulk. Nay, there must be some mistake, sure.—Sir Lucius shall explain himself—and I dare say matters may be accommodated:—but this evening, did you say?—I wish it had been any other time.

Abs.

Abs. Why?—there will be light enough:—there will, as Sir Lucius says, “be very pretty small-sword light, “tho’ it won’t do for a long shot.”—Confound his long shots!

Faulk. But I am myself a good deal ruffled, by a difference I have had with Julia—my vile tormenting temper has made me treat her so cruelly, that I shall not be myself till we are reconciled.

Abs. By Heav’ns, Faulkland, you don’t deserve her.

Enter Servant, gives FAULKLAND a letter.

Faulk. O Jack! this is from Julia—I dread to open it—I fear it may be to take a last leave—perhaps to bid me return her letters—and restore——O! how I suffer for my folly!

Abs. Here—let me see.

[*Takes the letter and opens it.*
Aye, a final sentence indeed!—’tis all over with you, faith!

Faulk. Nay, Jack—don’t keep me in suspense.

Abs. Hear then.—“As I am convinced
“that my dear Faulkland’s own reflections
“have already upbraided him for his last
“unkindness to me, I will not add a word
“on the subject.—I wish to speak with you
“as soon as possible.—Your’s ever and truly,
“Ju-

“Julia.”——There’s stubbornness and resentment for you! [*Gives him the letter.*]
Why, man, you don’t seem one whit the happier at this.

Faulk. O, yes, I am—but—but——

Abs. Confound your *buts*.—You never hear any thing that would make another man bless himself, but you immediately d—n it with a *but*.

Faulk. Now, Jack, as you are my friend, own honestly—don’t you think there is something forward—something indelicate in this haste to forgive?——Women should never sue for reconciliation:—*that* should *always* come from us.——*They* should retain their coldness till *woo’d* to kindness——and their *pardon*, like their *love*, should “not unfought be won.”

Abs. I have not patience to listen to you:—thou’rt incorrigible!—so say no more on the subject.—I must go to settle a few matters—let me see you before six—remember—at my lodgings.——A poor industrious devil like me, who have toil’d, and drudg’d, and plotted to gain my ends, and am at last disappointed by other people’s folly—may in pity be allowed to swear and grumble a little;—but a captious sceptic in love,—a slave to fretfulness and whim—who has no difficulties but of *his own* creating—is a subject

jest more fit for ridicule than compassion! [Exit ABSOLUTE.

Faulk. I feel his reproaches!—yet I would not change this too exquisite nicety, for the gross content with which *he* tramples on the thorns of love.—His engaging me in this duel, has started an idea in my head, which I will instantly pursue.—I'll use it as the touch-stone of Julia's sincerity and disinterestedness—if her love prove pure and sterling ore—my name will rest on it with honour!—and once I've stamp'd it there, I lay aside my doubts for ever:—but if the dross of selfishness, the alloy of pride predominate—'twill be best to leave her as a toy for some less cautious Fool to sigh for.

[Exit FAULKLAND.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT

A C T V. S C E N E I.

*JULIA'S Dressing-Room.**JULIA, sola.*

How this message has alarmed me! what dreadful accident can he mean! why such charge to be alone?——O Faulkland!——how many unhappy moments!——how many tears have you cost me!

Enter FAULKLAND, muffled up in a Riding-coat.

Jul. What means this?——why this caution, Faulkland?

Faulk. Alas! Julia, I am come to take a long farewell.

Jul. Heav'ns! what do you mean?

Faulk. You see before you a wretch, whose life is forfeited.—Nay, start not!——the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this misery on me.—I left you fretful and passionate——an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel—the event is, that I must fly this kingdom instantly.—O Julia, had I been so fortunate as to have call'd you mine intirely, before this mischance had fallen on me, I should not so deeply dread my banishment!——But no more of that—your heart and promise
were

were given to one happy in friends, character, and station! they are not bound to wait upon a solitary, guilty exile.

Ful. My soul is oppress'd with sorrow at the *nature* of your misfortune: had these adverse circumstances arisen from a less fatal cause, I should have felt strong comfort in the thought that I could *now* chase from your bosom every doubt of the warm sincerity of my love.—My heart has long known no other guardian—I now entrust my person to your honour—we will fly together.—When safe from pursuit, my Father's will may be fulfilled—and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your sorrows, and tenderest comforter. Then on the bosom of your wedded Julia, you may lull your keen regret to slumbering; while virtuous love, with a Cherub's hand, shall smooth the brow of upbraiding thought, and pluck the thorn from compunction.

Faulk. O Julia! I am bankrupt in gratitude! but the time is so pressing, it calls on you for so hasty a resolution.—Would you not wish some hours to weigh the advantages you forego, and what little compensation poor Faulkland can make you beside his solitary love?

Ful. I ask not a moment.—No, Faulkland, I have lov'd you for yourself: and if I now, more than ever, prize the
solemn

solemn engagement which so long has pledged us to each other, it is because it leaves no room for hard aspersions on my fame, and puts the seal of duty to an act of love.—But let us not linger.—Perhaps this delay——

Faulk. 'Twill be better I should not venture out again till dark.——Yet am I griev'd to think what numberless distresses will press heavy on your gentle disposition!

Ful. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act.—I know not whether 'tis so—but sure that alone can never make us unhappy.——The little I have will be sufficient to *support* us; and *exile* never should be splendid.

Faulk. Aye, but in such an abject state of life, my wounded pride perhaps may increase the natural fretfulness of my temper, till I become a rude, morose companion, beyond your patience to endure. Perhaps the recollection of a deed, my conscience cannot justify, may haunt me in such gloomy and unsocial fits, that I shall hate the tenderness that would relieve me, break from your arms, and quarrel with your fondness!

Ful. If your thoughts should assume so unhappy a bent, you will the more want some mild and affectionate spirit to watch over and console you:——One who, by
bearing

bearing *your* infirmities with gentleness and resignation, may teach you *so* to bear the evils of your fortune.

Faulk. O Julia, I have proved you to the quick! and with this useless device I throw away all my doubts. How shall I plead to be forgiven this last unworthy effect of my restless, unsatisfied disposition?

Jul. Has no such disaster happened as you related?

Faulk. I am ashamed to own that it was all pretended; yet in pity, Julia, do not kill me with resenting a fault which never can be repeated: But sealing, this once, my pardon, let me to-morrow, in the face of Heaven, receive my future guide and monitress, and expiate my past folly, by years of tender adoration.

Jul. Hold, Faulkland!—that you are free from a crime, which I before fear'd to name, Heaven knows how sincerely I rejoice!—These are tears of thankfulness for that! But that your cruel doubts should have urged you to an imposition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang, more keen than I can express!

Faulk. By Heav'n's! Julia——

Jul. Yet hear me.——My Father lov'd you, Faulkland! and you preserv'd the life that tender parent gave me; in his presence I pledged my hand——joyfully
pledged

pledged it—where before I had given my heart. When, soon after, I lost that parent, it seem'd to me that Providence had, in Faulkland, shewn me whither to transfer, without a pause, my grateful duty, as well as my affection: Hence I have been content to bear from you what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another.—I will not upbraid you, by repeating how you have trifled with my sincerity.——

Faulk. I confess it all! yet hear——

Ful. After such a year of trial—I might have flattered myself that I should not have been insulted with a new probation of my sincerity, as cruel as unnecessary! A trick of such a nature, as to shew me plainly, that when I thought you lov'd me best, you even then regarded me as a mean dissembler; an artful, prudent hypocrite.

Faulk. Never! never!

Ful. I now see it is not in your nature to be content, or confident in love. With this conviction——I never will be yours. While I had hopes that my persevering attention, and unrepublishing kindness might in time reform your temper, I should have been happy to have gain'd a dearer influence over you; but I will not furnish you with a licensed power to keep alive an incorrigible fault, at the

expencc of one who never would contend with you.

Faulk. Nay, but Julia, by my soul and honour, if after this——

Jul. But one word more.—As my faith has once been given to you, I never will barter it with another.—I shall pray for your happiness with the truest sincerity; and the dearest blessing I can ask of Heaven to send you, will be to charm you from that unhappy temper, which alone has prevented the performance of our solemn engagement.—All I request of *you* is, that you will yourself reflect upon this infirmity, and when you number up the many true delights it has deprived you of—let it not be your *least* regret, that it lost you the love of one—who would have follow'd you in beggary through the world!

[*Exit.*

Faulk. She's gone!—for ever!—There was an awful resolution in her manner, that rivetted me to my place.—O Fool!—Dolt!—Barbarian!—Curst as I am, with more imperfections than my fellow-wretches, kind Fortune sent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and, like a ruffian, I have driven her from my side!—I must now haste to my appointment.—Well my mind is tuned for such a scene.—I shall wish only to become a principal in it, and reverse the tale my cursed folly
put

put me upon forging here.—O Love! —Tormentor!—Fiend!—whose influence, like the Moon's, acting on men of dull souls, makes idiots of them, but meeting subtler spirits, betrays their course, and urges sensibility to madness! [*Exit.*

Enter MAID and LYDIA.

Maid. My Mistress, Ma'am, I know, was here just now—perhaps she is only in the next room. [*Exit MAID.*

Lyd. Heigh ho!—Though he has used me so, this fellow runs strangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave Cousin will make me recall him.

Enter JULIA.

Lyd. O Julia, I am come to you with such an appetite for consolation.—Lud! Child, what's the matter with you?—You have been crying!—I'll be hanged, if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you!

Jul. You mistake the cause of my uneasiness.—Something *has* flurried me a little.—Nothing that you can guess at.—I would not accuse Faulkland to a Sister!

[*Aside.*

Lyd. Ah! whatever vexations you may have, I can assure you mine surpass them.—You know who Beverley proves to be?

Jul. I will now own to you, Lydia, that Mr. Faulkland had before inform'd

me of the whole affair. Had young Absolute been the person you took him for, I should not have accepted your confidence on the subject, without a serious endeavour to counteract your caprice.

Lyd. So, then, I see I have been deceived by every one!—but I don't care—I'll never have him.

Ful. Nay, Lydia——

Lyd. Why, is it not provoking; when I thought we were coming to the prettiest distress imaginable, to find myself made a mere Smithfield bargain of at last—— There had I projected one of the most sentimental elopements!—so becoming a disguise!—so amiable a ladder of Ropes!—Conscious Moon—four horses—Scotch parson—with such surprise to Mrs. Malaprop—and such paragraphs in the Newspapers!——O, I shall die with disappointment.

Ful. I don't wonder at it!

Lyd. Now—sad reverse!—what have I to expect, but, after a deal of flimsy preparation with a bishop's licence, and my Aunt's blessing, to go simpering up to the Altar; or perhaps be cried three times in a country-church, and have an unmannerly fat clerk ask the consent of every butcher in the parish to join John Absolute and Lydia Languish, *Spinster*! O, that I should live to hear myself called *Spinster*!

Ful.

Jul. Melancholy, indeed!

Lyd. How mortifying, to remember the dear delicious shifts I used to be put to, to gain half a minute's conversation with this fellow!——How often have I stole forth, in the coldest night in January, and found him in the garden, stuck like a dripping statue!—There would he kneel to me in the snow, and sneeze and cough so pathetically! he shivering with cold, and I with apprehension! and while the freezing blast numb'd our joints, how warmly would he press me to pity his flame, and glow with mutual ardour!——Ah, Julia! that was something like being in love.

Jul. If I were in spirits, Lydia, I should chide you only by laughing heartily at you: but it suits more the situation of my mind, at present, earnestly to entreat you, not to let a man, who loves you with sincerity, suffer that unhappiness from your *caprice*, which I know too well caprice can inflict.

Lyd. O Lud! what has brought my Aunt here!

Enter Mrs. MALAPROP, FAG, and DAVID.

Mrs. Mal. So! so! here's fine work!—here's fine suicide, paracide, and salivation going on in the fields! and Sir An-

thony not to be found to prevent the antistrophe!

Ful. For Heaven's sake, Madam, what's the meaning of this?

Mrs. Mal. That gentleman can tell you—'twas he enveloped the affair to me.

Lyd. Do, Sir, will you inform us.

[*To Fag.*

Fag. Ma'am, I should hold myself very deficient in every requisite that forms the man of breeding, if I delay'd a moment to give all the information in my power to a lady so deeply interested in the affair as you are.

Lyd. But quick! quick, Sir!

Fag. True, Ma'am, as you say, one should be quick in divulging matters of this nature; for should we be tedious, perhaps while we are flourishing on the subject, two or three lives may be lost!

Lyd. O patience!—Do, Ma'am, for Heaven's sake! tell us what is the matter?

Mrs. Mal. Why, murder's the matter! slaughter's the matter! killing's the matter!—but he can tell you the perpendiculars.

Lyd. Then, prythee, Sir, be brief.

Fag. Why then, Ma'am—as to murder—I cannot take upon me to say—and as to slaughter, or man-slaughter, that will be as the jury finds it.

Lyd. But who, Sir—who are engaged in this?

Fag.

Fag. Faith, Ma'am, one is a young gentleman whom I should be very sorry any thing was to happen to—a very pretty behaved gentleman!——We have lived much together, and always on terms.

Lyd. But who is this? who! who! who!

Fag. My Master, Ma'am—my Master—I speak of my Master.

Lyd. Heavens! What, Captain Absolute!

Mrs. Mal. O, to be sure, you are frightened now!

Ful. But who are with him, Sir?

Fag. As to the rest, Ma'am, his gentleman can inform you better than I.

Ful. Do speak, friend. [To DAVID.]

David. Look'ee, my Lady——by the Mass! there's mischief going on.——Folks don't use to meet for amusement with fire-arms, firelocks, fire-engines, fire-screens, fire-office, and the devil knows what other crackets besides!——This, my Lady, I say, has an angry favour.

Ful. But who is there beside Captain Absolute, friend?

David. My poor Master—under favour, for mentioning him first.—You know me, my Lady—I am David—and my Master of course is, or *was* Squire Acres.—Then comes Squire Faulkland.

Ful. Do, Ma'am, let us instantly endeavour to prevent mischief.

Mrs. Mal. O fie—it would be very inelegant in us:—we should only participate things.

Dav. Ah! do, Mrs. Aunt, save a few lives—they are desperately given, believe me.—Above all, there is that blood-thirsty Philistine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Mrs. Mal. Sir Lucius O'Trigger!—O mercy! have they drawn poor little dear Sir Lucius into the scrape?—why, how you stand, girl! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyshire Putrefactions!

Lyd. What are we to do, Madam?

Mrs. Mal. Why, fly with the utmost felicity to be sure, to prevent mischief:—here, friend—you can shew us the place?

Fag. If you please, Ma'am, I will conduct you.—David, do you look for Sir Anthony. [Exit DAVID.

Mrs. Mal. Come, girls!—this gentleman will exhort us.—Come, Sir, you're our envoy—lead the way, and we'll precede.

Fag. Not a step before the ladies for the world!

Mrs. Mal. You're sure you know the spot.

Fag.

Fag. I think I can find it, Ma'am; and one good thing is, we shall hear the report of the pistols as we draw near, so we can't well miss them; never fear, Ma'am, never fear. [*Exeunt, he talking.*]

S C E N E II.

S O U T H - P A R A D E .

Enter ABSOLUTE, putting his sword under his great-coat.

Abs. A sword seen in the streets of Bath would raise as great an alarm as a mad-dog.—How provoking this is in Faulkland!—never punctual! I shall be obliged to go without him at last.—O, the devil! here's Sir Anthony!—how shall I escape him? [*Muffles up his face, and takes a circle to go off.*]

Enter Sir ANTHONY.

Sir Anth. How one may be deceived at a little distance! only that I see he don't know me, I could have sworn that was Jack!—Hey!—'Gad's life; it is.—Why, Jack, you Dog!—what are you afraid of?—hey! sure I'm right.—Why, Jack—Jack Absolute! [*Goes up to him.*]

Abs. Really, Sir, you have the advantage of me:—I don't remember ever to have

have had the honour——my name is Saunderfon, at your service.

Sir Anth. Sir, I beg your pardon——I took you—hey!—why, z—ds! it is——Stay——

[*Looks up to his face.*

So, so—your humble servant, Mr. Saunderfon!——Why, you scoundrel, what tricks are you after now?

Abf. O! a joke, Sir, a joke!—I came here on purpose to look for you, Sir.

Sir Anth. You did! well, I am glad you were so lucky:—but what are you muffled up so for?—what's this for?——hey?

Abf. Tis cool, Sir; isn't it?—rather chilly somehow:—but I shall be late—I have a particular engagement.

Sir Anth. Stay,—why, I thought you were looking for me?——Pray, Jack, where is't you are going?

Abf. Going, Sir!

Sir Anth. Aye—where are you going?

Abf. Where am I going?

Sir Anth. You unmannerly puppy!

Abf. I was going, Sir, to—to—to—to Lydia—Sir to Lydia—to make matters up if I could;—and I was looking for you, Sir, to—to——

Sir Anth. To go with you, I suppose—Well, come along.

Abf. O! z—ds! no, Sir, not for the world!—I wish'd to meet with you, Sir,
to

to—to—to——You find it cool, I'm sure, Sir—you'd better not stay out.

Sir Anth. Cool!—not at all——Well, Jack—and what will you say to Lydia?

Abf. O, Sir, beg her pardon, humour her—promise and vow:——but I detain you, Sir—consider the cold air on your gout.

Sir Anth. O, not at all!—not at all!—I'm in no hurry.—Ah! Jack, you youngsters when once you are wounded here.

[*Putting his hand to ABSOLUTE's breast.* Hey! what the deuce have you got here?

Abf. Nothing, Sir nothing.

Sir Anth. What's this?—here's something d—d hard!

Abf. O, trinkets, Sir! trinkets——a bauble for Lydia!

Sir Anth. Nay, let me see your taste.

[*Pulls his coat open, the sword falls.* Trinkets!—a bauble for Lydia!—z—ds! firrah, you are not going to cut her throat, are you?

Abf. Ha! ha! ha!—I thought it would divert you, Sir, tho' I didn't mean to tell you till afterwards.

Sir Anth. You didn't?—Yes, this is a very diverting trinket, truly.

Abf. Sir, I'll explain to you.——You know, Sir, Lydia is romantic—dev'lish romantic, and very absurd of course:—now, Sir, I intend, if she refuses to forgive

give me—to unsheath this sword—and swear—I'll fall upon its point, and expire at her feet!

Sir Anth. Fall upon fiddle-sticks end!—why, I suppose it is the very thing that would please her—Get along, you Fool.—

Abs. Well, Sir, you shall hear of my success—you shall hear.—“O, Lydia!—“forgive me, or this pointed steel”——says I.

Sir Anth. “O, Booby! stab away, and “welcome”—say she—Get along!—and d—n your trinkets! [*Exit ABSOLUTE.*

Enter DAVID, running.

Dav. Stop him! stop him! Murder! Thief! Fire!—Stop fire! Stop fire!—O! Sir Anthony!—call! call! bid 'em stop! Murder! Fire!

Sir Anth. Fire! Murder! where?

Dav. Oons! he's out of fight! and I'm out of breath, for my part! O, Sir Anthony, why didn't you stop him? why didn't you stop him?

Sir Anth. Z—ds! the fellow's mad!—Stop whom? stop Jack?

Dav. Aye, the Captain, Sir!—there's murder and slaughter——

Sir Anth. Murder!

Dav. Aye, please you, Sir Anthony, there's all kinds of murder, all sorts of slaughter to be seen in the fields: there's fighting

fighting going on, Sir—bloody sword-
and gun-fighting!

Sir Anth. Who are going to fight,
Dunce?

Dav. Every body that I know of, Sir
Anthony:—every body is going to fight;
my poor Master, Sir Lucius O'Trigger,
your son, the Captain——

Sir Anth. O, the Dog!——I see his
tricks:—do you know the place?

Dav. King's-Mead-Fields.

Sir Anth. You know the way?

Dav. Not an inch!—but I'll call the
Mayor—Aldermen—Constables—Church-
wardens—and Beadles—we can't be too
many to part them.

Sir Anth. Come along—give me your
shoulder! we'll get assistance as we go—
the lying villain!—Well, I shall be in such
a phrenzy—So—this was the history of
his d—d trinkets! I'll bauble him!

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T III.

KING'S - MEAD - FIELDS.

Sir LUCIUS and ACRES, with pistols.

Acres. By my valour! then, Sir Lucius,
forty yards is a good distance——Odds
levels and aims!——I say it is a good
distance.

Sir

Sir Luc. Is it for muskets or small field-pieces? upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave those things to me.—Stay now—I'll shew you.

[*Measures paces along the stage.*]
there now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

Acres. Z—ds! we might as well fight in a sentry-box!—I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off, the cooler I shall take my aim.

Sir Luc. Faith! then I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of fight!

Acres. No, Sir Lucius—but I should think forty or eight and thirty yards——

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! nonsense! three or four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

Acres. Odds bullets, no!—by my valour! there is no merit in killing him so near:—do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot:—a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me!

Sir Luc. Well—the gentleman's friend and I must settle that.—But tell me now, Mr. Acres, in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you?

Acres. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius—but I don't understand——

Sir

Sir Luc. Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk—and if an unlucky bullet should carry a *Quietus* with it—I say it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

Acres. A *Quietus*!

Sir Luc. For instance now——if that should be the case——would you chuse to be pickled and sent home?—or would it be the same to you to lie here in the Abbey?—I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

Acres. Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

Sir Luc. I suppose, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before?

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

Sir Luc. Ah! that's a pity!—there's nothing like being used to a thing.—Pray now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

Acres. Odds files!—I've practised that—there, Sir Lucius—there

[*Puts himself in an attitude.*
——a side-front, hey?—Odd! I'll make myself small enough:——I'll stand edge-ways.

Sir Luc. Now—you're quite out—for if you stand so when I take my aim——

[*Levelling at him.*

Acres.

Acres. Z——ds! Sir Lucius—are you sure it is not cock'd?

Sir Luc. Never fear.

Acres. But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

Sir Luc. Pho! be easy—Well, now if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance—for if it misses a vital part on your right side—'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left!

Acres. A vital part! O, my poor vitals!

Sir Luc. But, there—fix yourself so—

[*Placing him.*

let him see the broad side of your full front—there—now a ball or two may pass clear thro' your body, and never do any harm at all.

Acres. Clean thro' me!—a ball or two clean thro' me!

Sir Luc. Aye—may they—and it is much the genteelest attitude into the bargain.

Acres. Look'ee! Sir Lucius—I'd just as leive be shot in an aukward posture as a genteel one—so, by my valour! I will stand edge-ways.

Sir Luc. [*Looking at his watch.*] Sure they don't mean to disappoint us.—Hah?—no faith—I think I see them coming.

Acres. Hey!—what!—coming!—

Sir Luc. Aye—Who are those yonder getting over the stile?

Acres.

Acres. There are two of them, indeed!—well—let them come—hey, Sir Lucius!—we—we—we—we—won't run.—

Sir Luc. Run!

Acres. No—I say—we *won't* run, by my valour!

Sir Luc. What the devil's the matter with you?

Acres. Nothing—nothing——my dear friend——my dear Sir Lucius—but—I-I—I don't feel quite so bold, somehow—as I did.

Sir Luc. O fie!—consider your honour.

Acres. Aye—true—my honour——Do, Sir Lucius, hedge in a word or two every now and then about my honour.

Sir Luc. Well, here they're coming.

[*Looking.*

Acres. Sir Lucius—if I wa'n't with you, I should almost think I was afraid—if my valour should leave me!——Valour will come and go.

Sir Luc. Then, pray keep it fast, while you have it.

Acres. Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes—my valour is certainly going!—it is sneaking off!—I feel it oozing out as it were at the palms of my hands!

Sir Luc. Your honour—your honour—Here they are.

Acres. O mercy!—now—that I were safe at *Clod-Hall!* or could be shot before I was aware!

Enter FAULKLAND and ABSOLUTE.

Sir Luc. Gentlemen, your most obedient—hah!—what Captain Absolute!—So, I suppose, Sir, you are come here, just like myself—to do a kind office, first for your friend—then to proceed to business on your own account.

Acres. What, Jack!—my dear Jack!—my dear friend!

Abs. Heark'ee, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

Sir Luc. Well, Mr. Acres—I don't blame your saluting the gentleman civilly.—So, Mr. Beverley, [*to FAULKLAND*] if you'll chuse your weapons, the Captain and I will measure the ground.

Faulk. My weapons, Sir.

Acres. Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland; these are my particular friends.

Sir Luc. What, Sir, did not you come here to fight Mr. Acres?

Faulk. Not I, upon my word, Sir.

Sir Luc. Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game—you won't be so cantankerous as to spoil the party by sitting out.

Abs. O pray, Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

Faulk. Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter.

Acres. No, no, Mr. Faulkland—I'll bear my disappointment like a Christian
—Look'ee

—Look'ee, Sir Lucius, there's no occasion at all for me to fight; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

Sir Luc. Observe me, Mr. Acres——I must not be trifled with. You have certainly challenged somebody——and you came here to fight him——Now, if that gentleman is willing to represent him—I can't see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

Acres. Z—ds, Sir Lucius—I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged—a fellow, you see, that dare not shew his face! If *he* were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly!——

Abs. Hold, Bob—let me set you right—there is no such man as Beverley in the case.—The person who assumed that name is before you; and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

Sir Luc. Well, this is lucky—Now you have an opportunity—

Acres. What, quarrel with my dear friend Jack Absolute—not if he were fifty Beverleys! Z—ds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me be so unnatural.

Sir Luc. Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valour has *oozed* away with a vengeance!

Acres. Not in the least! Odds Backs and Abettors! I'll be your second with all my heart—and if you should get a *Quietus*,

you may command me entirely. I'll get you a *snug* lying in the *Abbey* here; or *pickle* you, and send you over to *Blunderbush-hall*, or any of the kind with the greatest pleasure.

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

Acres. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a *Coward*; *Coward* was the word, by my valour!

Sir Luc. Well, Sir?

Acres. Look'ee, Sir Lucius, 'tisn't that I mind the word *Coward*—*Coward* may be said in joke.—But if you had call'd me a *Poltroon*, Odds Daggers and Balls!

Sir Luc. Well, Sir?

Acres. ———I should have thought you a very ill-bred man.

Sir Luc. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

Abs. Nay, Sir Lucius, you can't have a better second than my friend, Acres—He is a most *determined dog*——call'd in the country, *Fighting Bob*.——He generally kills a man a week; don't you, Bob?

Acres. Aye—at home!

Sir Luc. Well then, Captain, 'tis we must begin——so come out, my little counsellor, [draws his sword. and ask the gentleman, whether he will resign the lady, without forcing you to proceed against him?

Abs. Come on then, Sir; [draws] since you won't let it be an amicable suit, here's my reply.

Enter

Enter Sir ANTHONY, DAVID, and the WOMEN.

David. Knock 'em all down, sweet Sir Anthony, knock down my Master in particular—and bind his hands over to their good behaviour!

Sir Anth. Put up, Jack, put up, or I shall be in a frenzy—how came you in a duel, Sir?

Abs. Faith, Sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he call'd on me, and you know, Sir, I serve his Majesty.

Sir Anth. Here's a pretty fellow; I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me, he serves his Majesty!——Zounds! firrah, then how durst you draw the King's sword against one of his subjects?

Abs. Sir, I tell you! That gentleman call'd me out, without explaining his reasons.

Sir Anth. Gad! Sir, how came you to call my son out, without explaining your reasons?

Sir Luc. Your son, Sir, insulted me in a manner which my honour could not brook.

Sir Anth. Zounds! Jack, how durst you insult the gentleman in a manner which his honour could not brook?

Mrs. Mal. Come, come, let's have no Honour before ladies—Captain Absolute, come here—How could you intimidate us

so?—Here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

Abs. For fear I should be kill'd, or escape, Ma'am?

Mrs. Mal. Nay, no delusions to the past—Lydia is convinc'd; speak child.

Sir Luc. With your leave, Ma'am, I must put in a word here—I believe I could interpret the young lady's silence—Now mark—

Lyd. What is it you mean, Sir?

Sir Luc. Come, come, Delia, we must be serious now—this is no time for trifling.

Lyd. 'Tis true, Sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand, and solicit the return of his affections.

Abs. O! my little angel, say you so?—Sir Lucius—I perceive there must be some mistake here—with regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you—I can only say, that it could not have been intentional.—And as you must be convinced, that I should not fear to support a real injury—you shall now see that I am not ashamed to atone for an inadvertency—I ask your pardon.—But for this lady, while honour'd with her approbation, I will support my claim against any man whatever.

Sir Anth. Well said, Jack, and I'll stand by you, my Boy.

Acres. Mind, I give up all my claim—I make no pretensions to any thing in the world

world—and if I can't get a wife, without fighting for her, by my Valour! I'll live a bachelor.

Sir Luc. Captain, give me your hand——an affront handsomely acknowledged becomes an obligation——and as for the Lady——if she chuses to deny her own hand-writing here— [*Taking out letters.*

Mrs. Mal. O, he will desolve my mystery!—Sir Lucius, perhaps there's some mistake—perhaps, I can illuminate—

Sir Luc. Pray, old gentlewoman, don't interfere, where you have no business.—Miss Languish, are you my Delia, or not?

Lyd. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not.

[*LYDIA and ABSOLUTE walk aside.*

Mrs. Mal. Sir Lucius O'Trigger—ungrateful as you are—I own the soft impeachment——pardon my blushes, I am Delia.

Sir Luc. You Delia——pho! pho! be easy.

Mrs. Mal. Why, thou barbarous Vandyke—those letters are mine—When you are more sensible of my benignity—perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addresses.

Sir Luc. Mrs. Malaprop, I am extremely sensible of your condescension; and whether you or Lncy have put this trick upon me, I am equally beholden to you.——And to shew you I'm not ungrateful, Captain Absolute! since you have taken

that lady from me, I'll give you my Delia into the bargain.

Abs. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius; but here's our friend, fighting Bob, unprovided for.

Sir Luc. Hah! little Valour—here, will you make your fortune?

Acres. Odds Wrinkles! No.—But give us your hand, Sir Lucius, forget and forgive; but if ever I give you a chance of pickling me again, say Bob Acres is a Dunce, that's all.

Sir Anth. Come, Mrs. Malaprop, don't be cast down—you are in your bloom yet.

Mrs. Mal. O Sir Anthony!—men are all barbarians—

[*All retire but JULIA and FAULKLAND.*

Ful. He seems dejected and unhappy—not sullen—there was some foundation, however, for the tale he told me——O woman! how true should be your judgment, when your resolution is so weak!

Faulk. Julia!—how can I sue for what I so little deserve? I dare not presume—yet Hope is the child of Penitence.

Ful. Oh! Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me, than I am now in wanting inclination to resent it. As my heart honestly bids me place my weakness to the account of love, I should be ungenerous not to admit the same plea for your's.

Faulk.

Faulk. Now I shall be blest indeed!

[*Sir ANTHONY comes forward.*

Sir Anth. What's going on here?—So you have been quarrelling too, I warrant.—Come, Julia, I never interfered before; but let me have a hand in the matter at last.—All the faults I have ever seen in my friend Faulkland, seemed to proceed from what he calls the *delicacy* and *warmth* of his affection for you—There, marry him directly, Julia, you'll find he'll mend surprisingly!

[*The rest come forward.*

Sir Luc. Come now, I hope there is no dissatisfied person, but what is content; for as I have been disappointed myself, it will be very hard if I have not the satisfaction of seeing other people succeed better—

Acres. You are right, Sir Lucius.—So, Jack, I wish you joy—Mr. Faulkland the same.—Ladies,—come now, to shew you I'm neither vex'd nor angry, Odds Tabors and Pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour, to the New Rooms—and I insist on you all meeting me there.

Sir Anth. Gad! Sir, I like your spirit; and at night we single lads will drink a health to the young couples, and a husband to Mrs. Malaprop.

Faulk. Our partners are stolen from us, Jack—I hope to be congratulated by each other—yours for having checked in time,
the

the errors of an ill-directed Imagination, which might have betray'd an innocent heart; and mine, for having, by her gentleness and candour, reformed the unhappy temper of one, who by it made wretched whom he loved most, and tortured the heart he ought to have ador'd.

Abs. Well, Jack, we have both tasted the Bitters, as well as the Sweets, of Love—with this difference only, that *you* always prepared the bitter cup for yourself, while *I*——

Lyd. Was always obliged to *me* for it, hey! Mr. Modesty?——But come, no more of that—our happiness is now as unallay'd as general.

Ful. Then let us study to preserve it so: and while Hope pictures to us a flattering scene of future Bliss, let us deny its pencil those colours which are too bright to be lasting.—When Hearts deserving Happiness would unite their fortune, Virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modest, hurtless flowers; but ill-judging Passion will force the gaudier Rose into the wreath, whose thorn offends them, when its Leaves are dropt!

F I N I S

M A Y . D A Y :

OR, THE

LITTLE GIPSY.

A

COMEDY.

Dramatis Personae.

MEN.

FURROW, *a rich* CLOD, *his servant.*
farmer. DOZEY.

WILLIAM, *his son.* CRYER.

WOMEN.

LITTLE GIPSY. DOLLY.

Country Lads and Lasses.

M A Y - D A Y:

OR, THE

L I T T L E G I P S Y.

S C E N E I.

—Enter WILLIAM and DOLLY.—

William. **G**O on, dear sister Dolly—
And so my sweet girl was brought to the Widow Gadly's, as a relation of her's from Shropshire, and went by the name of Belton?

Dol. Yes, yes—you had not been gone to London two days, before your father and she met in the Widow's garden; I was with him, he was very inquisitive indeed, and was struck with her in a lively manner; I could hardly get him home to dinner.

Wm. Why this was beyond expectation; and so, Dolly—

Dol. Yes, his liking went much beyond my expectation, or your wishes: In a week he fell in love with her, and is at this time a very dangerous rival.

Wm.

Wm. I am fure to have some mischief happen in all my schemes.

Dol. Her finging, and twenty little agreeable fooleries she puts on, have bewitch'd him: Her mimiking the Gipsies has so enchanted him, that he has prevail'd upon her to come to the May-pole to-day among the holiday lads and lasses, and tell their fortunes. She has dress'd up herself often and been among 'em, without their knowing who she is—in short, she has bewitch'd the whole village—I am to be there too as her mother—My father will have it so.

Wm. So much the better, while you are telling fortunes, I may talk to her without being observ'd; send but a fortune-teller, or a mountebank, among country people, and they have no eyes, and ears, for any thing else: Where is my father now?

Dol. Upon some knotty point with Roger Dozey, the clerk—I must go, and prepare for the frolick: don't be melancholy, Will; the worst that can happen is to marry the girl without your father's consent, turn gipsy with your wife, and send you children to steal his poultry.

Wm. But harkee, Dolly, who is to have Mr. Goodwill's May-day legacy? A hundred pounds is a tolerable foundation
to

to build upon—What is become of George, Dolly?

Dol. I have not time to tell you—He is a rogue like the rest of you: But as I have a heart that can make an honest man happy that possesses it, so it has a spirit within it to despise a knave, or a coxcomb.

*Would women do as I do ;
With spirit scorn dejection,
The men no arts could fly to,
They'd keep 'em in subjection:
But if we sigh or simper,
The love-sick farce is over,
They'll bring us soon to whimper,
And then good night the lover.*

*Would women do as I do,
No knaves or fools could cheat 'em,
They'd passion bid good bye to,
And trick for trick would meet 'em:
But if we sigh or simper,
The love-sick farce is over,
They'll bring us soon to whimper,
And then good night the lover.*

Wm. Well said, Dolly!——but I am afraid in my situation, I must give up all hope.

Dol. Then you'll give up the best friend you have; make much of her, or with a true female spirit, like mine, she'll leave you

you the moment you seem to neglect
her.

[Exit DOLLY.

WILLIAM.

*How can my heart rest, when I see from the
land,*

*Fanny's arms open'd wide to receive me?
If hope cast her anchor to fix on the sand,
The winds, and the waves both deceive me.*

*My love to its duty, still constant and true,
Tho' of fortune and tempest the sport,
Shall beat round the shore, the dear object in
view,*

'Till it sinks, or is safe in the port.

SCENE, *a Hall in FURROW'S
House.*

Enter FURROW and DOZEY.

Fur. Well, but Dozey, think a little,
and hear a little before you speak, and
understand my question.

Doz. Put it.—

Fur. You know that Walter Goodwill,
Esq. left a legacy of one hundred pounds,
to the couple who shall be married upon
certain conditions, in this parish, on the
first of May.

Doz. I have 'em in my hand here, a
true copy.

Fur. You told me so before.

Doz.

Doz. Truth may be told at any time.

Fur. Zounds! hold your tongue or we shall keep talking all day.

Doz. Keep your temper, which is a better thing.

Fur. But I can't, if you won't hear me.

Doz. I say nothing, and will say nothing. [*Twirling his thumbs.*]

Fur. I know you are my friend Dozey, and I have been your friend—I found you a good companion and a scholar, and got you rais'd from sexton to clerk.

Doz. Necessity! There was but one person more in the parish beside myself who could read, and he stammer'd.

Fur. Well, well, no matter, we shall never come to the point.

Doz. Never, if you travel out of the way so.

Fur. I say then——

Doz. And I am silent.

Fur. I am over head and ears in love.

Doz. You had better be over head and ears in your horse-pond, for that might cool you—Put no more upon an old horse than he can bear—An excellent saying!

Fur. You put more upon me than I can bear: I want no advice but your opinion. If I marry Fanny Belton, may I demand 'Squire Goodwill's hundred pound legacy?

Doz. I will read it.

[*Searching for his spectacles.*]

Fur. Zounds, I have read it a thousand times; and the bellman cries it all about the parish.

Doz. Are you her free choice?

Fur. To be sure I am, as she is mine.

Doz. What age has she?

Fur. About twenty.

Doz. Has she her senses perfect?

Fur. To be sure.

Doz. I doubt it!——a girl of twenty marry three-score and five, a free choice, and in her senses, it can't be.

Fur. You are grown old and stupid.

Doz. She must be young and stupid, which is worse.

Fur. May I claim the legacy, if I marry her?

Doz. You say the choice is free?

Fur. I do.

Doz. But is it not *fit*, another of the conditions—The choice must be both *free* and *fit*—Ergo I say you can't have a penny of it.

Fur. Why will you vex me so, Roger Dozey? I am always helping you out of scrapes and difficulties, and why won't you assist me?

Doz. I am getting you out of a scrape now, by preventing your marrying.

Fur. I'll tell you what Roger—there is something so perverse about you, that tho'

tho' I am your friend, you are always thwarting me.

Doz. Because you're always wrong—You are so blinded with passion, that you wou'd thrust your hand in the fire, if I did not take care that you should not burn your fingers.

Fur. Well, but dear Dozey, you are the forehorse of this parish, and can lead the rest of the team as you please. Pray now con over this matter by yourself, you shall sit in my little smoaking room, and have a bottle of my best October to help your study, and when you have finished the bottle, and settled your mind with a dram afterwards, meet me at the may-pole, and give your opinion. I shall be there by that time, to claim the girl, and the legacy——If it is mine, a good large fee out of it shall be yours. Remember that.— [Exit.

Doz. It is the only thing you have said worth remembering—let me see—a large fee, and a good bottle of October will do wonders—and yet to make the union of one and twenty, with sixty-five *fit*, will require more fees than his purse can furnish, and more October than ever was, or ever will be in his cellar——However, not to be rash——I'll drink the bottle, and consider the case. [Exit.

A Country Prospect,

A VILLAGE *and* a MAY-POLE
with a GARLAND.

*Lads and Lasses are discover'd dancing, while
others are playing on the ground.*

After the Dance, they surround the May-Pole and sing the following

CHORUS.

O lovely sweet May!
The first of sweet May!
Spring opens her treasure,
Of mirth, love and pleasure
The earth is dress'd gay,
We see all around, and we hear from each
spray,
That nature proclaims it a festival day.

Clod. Well fung my lasses—which of you all will have 'Squire Goodwill's legacy? I don't believe that any of you are in the right road to it—it must be turn'd over to the next year, and then I shall marry one of you out of pity, and get double by it.

Bet. I'll assure you, Goodman Clod—I would not have you for double, and double, and double—

Clod.

Clod. The grapes are sour, Betty—

Nan. What a sin, and a shame is it—that a poor girl should miss such a fine fortune, for want of a sweetheart.

Bet. It's a sin, and a shame that there's no young fellow to be had for love or money——The devil is in 'em I believe.

Nan. They are like their betters in London—they marry, as they would do any thing for money——but then they yawn, and had rather let it alone.

Clod. What the duce, have we got any maccatonies in the country?

Bet. Maccatonies! What are them, Clod?

Clod. Tho'f I saw a power of 'em, when I was up among 'em, yet I hardly know what to make of 'em.——

Bet. What were they living creters?

Clod. Yea, and upon two legs, too—Such as they were.

Nan. What like christians?

Clod. 'Ecod I don't know what they're alike, not I—they look like something—and yet they are nothing—I heard a person say, I sat next to at the show play, for I would see every thing, that these maccatonies, say themselves they have no souls, and I say they have no bodies, and so we may well say that they look like something, and are nothing, 'ecod.

Bet. Come prithee Clod, let's hear all about what you saw in London, and about the fine ladies too, what did they look like pray?

Clod. Like a hundred things, all in one day, but my song that I got there, will tell you better all about it, than I can.

S O N G.

I.

*What's a poor simple clown,
To do in the town,
Of their freaks, and fagaries, I'll none,
The folks I saw there,
Two faces did wear,
An honest man ne'er has but one.*

C H O R U S.

*Let others to London go roam,
I love my neighbour,
To sing and to labour,
To me there's nothing like country and home.*

II.

*Nay the ladies, I vow,
I cannot tell how,
Were now white as curd, and now red;
Law! how would you stare,
At their huge crop of hair,
Tis a haycock o'top of their head!
Cho. Let others, &c.*

III.

III.

*Then 'tis so dizen'd out,
An with trinkets about,
With Ribbands and slippers between;
They so noddle and toss,
Just like a fore horse,
With tassels, and bells in a team.
Cho. Let others, &c.*

IV.

*Then the fops are so fine,
With lank wasted chine,
And a little skimp bit of a hat;
Which from sun, wind, and rain,
Will not shelter their brain,
Tho' there's no need to take care of that.
Cho. Let others, &c.*

V.

*"Would you these creatures ape,
"In looks, and their shape,
"Teach a calf on his hind legs to go;
"Let him waddle in gait,
"A skim-dish on his pate,
"And he'll look all the world like a Beau.
Cho. "Let others, &c.*

VI.

*"To keep my brains right,
"My bones whole and tight,
"To speak, nor to look, would I dare;
"As they bake they shall brew,
"Old Nick and his crew,
"At London keep Vanity Fair.
Cho. "Let others, &c.*

All. Well sung, Clod——

Bet. But, tell us, Clod—how did young Will Furrow behave in London?—he rak'd it about, I suppose, and that makes him so scornful to us.

Clod. Poor lad! he was more mop'd than I was; he's not scornful—His Father, shame upon him, cross'd him in love, and he sent him there to forget it.

Nan. And he ought to be cross'd in love; what does he mean by taking his love out of the parish? if he has lost one there, he may find another here, egad, and I had lik'd to have said a better.

Clod. Ay, but that's as he thinks—if he loves lamb, he won't like to be cramm'd with Pork——Ha, ha, ha!

Bet. His father wou'd send him to the market town to make a schollard of him, which only gave him a hankering to be proud, to wear a tucker and despise his neighbours.

Clod. Here he comes, and let him speak for himself—he looks as gay as the best of us.

Enter WILLIAM.

Wm. My sweet lasses, a merry May to you all—I must have the priviledge of the day—Kisses and the first of May have ever gone together in our Village, and I hate to break thro' a good old custom. [*Kisses 'em.*]

Bet.

Bet. Old customs are good all the year round, and there can't be a better than this——

[Curtsey's and Kisses him.]

[The tabor and pipe is heard.]

Clod. Come, come, adon with your kissing, for here comes the cryer to proclaim 'Squire Goodwill's legacy.

Enter CRYER, tabor and pipe playing.

Cry. O yes! O yes! O yes! Be it known to all lads, lasses of this Village of Couple-Well, that George Goodwill, Esq; iate of Bounty-Hall, in this Country, has made the following bequest—You, my lads, open your ears, and you, my lasses, hold your tongues, and hear his worship's legacy.

Clod. Silence——Silence.

CRYER, reads.

*Is there a maid, and maid she be,
But how to find her out, who knows?*

Clod. Who knows indeed!

Cry. Silence, and don't disturb the court.

*Is there a maid, and maid she be, [reads.
But how to find her out, who knows?
Who makes a choice that's fit and free,
To buy the wedding cloaths;*

If

*If such rare maid and match be found,
Within the Parish bound,
The first of May,
Shall be the day,*

I give this pair a hundred pound,

God save the King!

*[Exit CRYER, the lads and
lasses buzzaing!]*

Wm. Well, my good girls, and which of you is to have the hundred pound legacy?

Nan. Any of us, if you will give us a right and title—what say you to that Mr. William? The money ought not to go out of the parish.

Bet. Ay come now—here are choice; you must be very nice indeed, if one of us, and a hundred pound won't satisfy you.

Clod. 'Ecod but he knows a trick worth two of that. *[Aside.]*

Bet. Well, what say you, Mr. Will?

Wm. I like you all so well, that I can't find in my heart to take one of you without the others.

Nan. What, would you make a great Turk of us, and live like a heathen in a serallery?

WIL-

WILLIAM.

I.

*Yes, I'll give my heart away,
To her will not forsake it,
Softly maidens, softly pray,
You must not snatch,
Nor fight, nor scratch,
But gently, gently take it.*

II.

*Ever constant warm and true,
The toy is worth the keeping,
'Tis not spoild with fashions new;
But full of love,
It will not rove——
The corn is worth the reaping.*

III.

*Maidens, come, put in your claim,
I will not give it blindly:
My heart a lamb, tho' brisk is tame;
So let each lass,
Before me pass,
Who wins, pray use it kindly.*

IV.

*All have such bewitching ways,
To give to one would wrong ye;
In turns to each my fancy strays;
So let each fair,
Take equal share,
I throw my heart among ye.*

Clod.

Clod. You may as well throw your hat among 'em, Master William; these lasses cannot live upon such slender fare, as a bit of your heart.

Wm. Then they must fast, Clod; for I have not even a bit of my heart to give them. [*Aside.*] What in the name of May, neighbours, comes tripping thro' Farmer Danby's gate, and looks like May from top to toe.

Clod. As I hope to be marry'd 'tis the Little Gipsy that has got a bit of your father's heart; aye, and a good bit too, and holds it fast.

Jen. I'll be hang'd if she's not going to the Grange now——Your father casts a sheep's eye at her—He hinders his own son from wedding lawfully, while he is running after this Little Gipsy——I hope she'll run away with his silver tankard.

Wm. Upon my word I think my father has a good taste. How long has she been amongst you? who is she? what is she? and whence comes she?

Jen. That we neither know, nor can guess—She always comes out of 'Squire Grinly's Copse, but nobody knows how she gets there—Clod dog'd her t'other night, but she took care to throw something in his eyes, that struck fire, and half blinded him.

Clod.

Clod. Ay, feath, did she; and while I was rubbing 'em, she vanished away, and left me up to my middle in a bog.

Wm. Poor Clod! you paid dearly for peeping.

Bet. I wish she would sing! she is a perfect nightingale.

Wm. Hush! hark! I hear something—let's go back, or she may be sham'd fac'd——She's very young, and seems very modest——True merit is always bashful, and should never want for encouragement: She comes this way—let us keep back a little. [*They retire.*]

Enter LITTLE GIPSY.

G I P S Y.

*Hail, Spring! whose charms make nature
gay,*

*O breathe some charm on me,
That I may bless this joyful day,
Inspir'd by Love, and thee!*

*O Love! be all thy magic mine,
Two faithful hearts to save;
The glory as the cause be thine,
And heal the wounds you gave.*

What a character am I oblig'd to support? I shall certainly be discover'd—the country folks I see are retir'd to watch me, and my sweet heart among 'em—I
am

am more afraid of a discovery from these, than from wiser people——Cunning will very often overshoot the mark, while simplicity hits it. I must rely upon my dress and manner—if I can but manage to tell other people's fortune, tho' but falsely, I may really make my own.

Clod. She mutters something to herself; I wish I could hear what she is maundring about.

Wm. Fortune-tellers always do so—the devil must be always talk'd to very civilly, and not loud, or he won't be at their elbow.

Clod. Lord bless her, there's no harm in her——I wish I was the devil to be so talk'd to.

Gip. What a frolick have I begun! should I succeed, our present distress will double our succeeding happiness——

[*The country people come forward.*
Your servant, pretty maids, and to you also young men, if you are good, for naughtiness, they say, has found its way into the country——I hope none of you have seen it.

Wm. O, yes; I have seen enough of it, it hangs about one like a pest; and for fear my cloaths should be infected, I order'd that they should be burnt before I left London.

Clod.

Clod. Ay, ay, wickedness there sticks to a body like pitch.

Gip. Then I'll fly away from the infection. [Going.

Wm. No, no, you little Gipsy, that won't do, we must hear that sweet voice again, and have our fortunes told before you go away. [They lay hold upon her.

Jen. I vow, neighbours, I think I have seen this face before.

Gip. It is not worth looking upon a second time.

Wm. Indeed but it is, I could look at it for ever.

Clod. 'Ecod and so could I, and buss it into the bargain.

Bet. Law, don't make such a fuss with the poor girl, as if nobody was worth kissing but a Gipsy—sing away, child, and don't mind 'em.

Gip. No more I will, mistrefs.

[Curtseys.

G I P S Y.

I.

*O spread thy rich mantle, sweet May, o'er
the ground,*

*Drive the blasts of keen winter away;
Let the birds sweetly carol, thy flow'rets
smile round,*

And let us with all nature be gay.

II.

II.

Let spleen, spight, and envy, those clouds
of the mind,
Be dispers'd by the sunshine of joy;
The pleasures of Eden had bless'd human kind,
Had no fiend enter'd there to destroy.

III.

As May with ber sunshine can warm the
cold earth,
Let each fair with the season improve ;
Be widows restor'd from their mourning to
mirth,
And hard-hearted maids yield to love.

IV.

With the treasures of spring, let the village
be dress'd,
Its joys let the season impart;
When rapture swells high, and o'erflows from
each breast,
'Tis the May of the mind and the heart.

Wm. Now you have charm'd our ears
one way, my sweet Gipsy, delight our
hearts by telling us our fortunes.

Clod. Here are fine crows doings in my hand. [Shewing it.

Jen. Pray look into mine first.

[Cleaning her hand.]

Dol. Here's a hand for you, Gipfy!

[Shewing hers.

Gip.

Gip. I never saw a worse in all my life; bless me! here is—it frights me to see it!

Dol. Then I am sure it will fright me to hear it, so I'll stay till another time.

Wm. Little pretty Gipsy, what say you to mine?

Gip. [*Looking into his hand*] You have a dozen lasses in love with you, and are in love with none of 'em.

Clod. There's a little witch for you!

Wm. There you are out, Gipsy; I do love one truly and sincerely.

Gip. As much as you love me—don't believe him, lasses——Come, come, let me see your hand again—by the faith of a Gipsy, you are in love, and the lass that you love——

All. Who is she? [*Getting about her.*

Gip. She is in this parish, and not above twenty yards from the maypole.

Clod. The dickens she is! who? who is it? [*All looking out.*

Wm. Say no more, Gipsy; you know nothing at all of the matter; you should be whip'd for fibbing.

Clod. And I'll be the constable; but 'ecod I would not hurt her.

Gip. Ay, but I do know, and she is about my size. [*They all measure with her.*

Wm. Hold your tongue I say—here comes your mother I suppose.

Enter DOLLY, like an old Gipsy.

Dol. What, did you run away from me you little baggage? Have I not warn'd you from wandering in the fields by yourself these wicked times?

Gip. Pray, mother, don't be angry; the morning was so fine, the fields so charming, and the lads and lasses so merry, I could not stay at home, and I knew you'd come limping after——

Dol. Hussy, hussy! have not I told you, that when the kid wanders from its dam, the fox will have a breakfast.

Clod. 'Ecod, and a good breakfast too—it makes my mouth water.

Dol. I don't much like the company you are in—who is that young rake there?

Wm. One that hates kid, mother, and is only giving your daughter a little good advice.

Dol. Indeed the young fellows of this age are not so/rampant as they were in my days.—Well, my lads and lasses, who among you longs to know their fortunes? I am the oldest, and the best fortune-teller under the sun.

[They all gather about her.]

Wm. Now, my dear little Gipsy, you must tell me my fortune.

[They retire, and the rest get about Dolly.]

Jen. Now for it, mother.

DOLLY.

D O L L Y.

Young maids, and young swains, if you're
curious to know,

What husbands you'll have, and what wives;
From above I can know, what you'll do here
below,

And what you have done all your lives:

Don't blush and don't fear.

As I'm old I am wise,

And I read in your eyes——

I must whisper the rest in your ear.

If you, a false man, should betray a fond
maid,

I'll read what the stars have decreed;

If you, a fond maid, should be ever betray'd,
You'll be sorry that page I should read.

Don't blush, and don't fear, &c.

If youth weds old age, tho' it wallows in gold,
With sattins, and silks, and fine watch;
Yet when for base gold, youth and beauty is
sold,

The devil alone makes the match.

Don't blush, and don't fear, &c.

"If an old man's so rash, to wed a young wife,

"Or an old woman wed a young man;

"For such husband and wife, I read danger
"and strife,

"For nature detests such a plan.

"Don't blush, and don't fear, &c."

Clod. There's a flap o'the chops for old measter, 'ecod, I wish he was here to take it.

Jen. But now, come to particulars, goody Gipsy.

Nan. Ay, ay, to particulars, we must have particulars.

Clod. Ay, zooks, let's understand your gibberish.

Dol. Let me sit down upon the bench under yonder tree, and I'll tell you all I know.

Clod. And he that desires to know more is a fool—come along, Dame Deal-Devil.

[They retire with Dolly, and then William and Gipsy come forward.]

Wm. May heaven prosper what love has invented; and may this joyful day finish our cares for ever!

D U E T T O.

W I L L I A M and G I P S Y.

*Passion of the purest nature,
Glow's within this faithful breast,
While I gaze on each lov'd feature,
Love will let me know no rest.*

*Thus the ewe her lamb caressing,
Watches with a mother's fear,
While she eyes her little blessing,
Thinks the cruel wolf is near.*

Far.

Fur. [*without*] Where is the Gipsy? where is my little Gipsy, I say?

Wm. The wolf is near indeed, for here comes my father.

Gip. What shall we do?

Enter FURROW.

Fur. Where are the lads and lasses, and what are you two doing here alone?

Wm. Had I my will, we should not long have been here alone: I would have put her into the hands of the constable, and sent her to her parish.

[*Gipsy looks grave.*

Fur. She has cheated him too—that's excellent! this is a rare frolic, faith [*aside.*] You send her to the constable, you booby!—I should have put you in the stocks if you had, Sirrah—don't be grave, my little pretty Gipsy, that bumkin shan't hurt you—what a fine may-game this is!—I love her more than ever!—I'll marry her to-day, and have the hundred pounds too—— [*Aside.*

Gip. I'll go home directly, I can't bear to see that young man look so cross.

[*Going.*

Fur. You shall go to my home, my dainty sweet Gipsy, and make him look crosser.

Wm. I wonder, father, you are not ashamed of yourself, to be impos'd upon

by such a little pilfering creature, she ought to be whip'd from village to village, and made an example of.—

Fur. How the fool is taken in!—I'm out of my wits [*aside.*] I'll make an example of you, rascal, if you don't speak more tenderly to that lady.

Wm. Lady! a fine lady! ha! ha! ha!

Gip. Don't put yourself into a rage with him, he is mad they say, mad for love.

Fur. So am I too—I am his father, and have more right to be mad than he has.

Wm. A lady!—A Gipsy lady!—ha, ha, ha!

Fur. And what is more, Mr. Impudence, she shall be my lady—and then what will you say to that, rascal?

Wm. That you have got a fine lady.

Fur. Have I given you a good education, you ungrateful whelp you, to laugh at me? Get out of my sight, or I'll spoil your mummary—I will—

[*Holding up his stick.*]

Wm. I am gone, Sir—one word if you please——You prevented me from being happy with the choice of my heart, and to one superior to her sex in every quality of the mind, and now without the excuse of youth on your part, or the least merit on her's—As you have made me miserable with great cruelty, you are going to make yourself so without reason. And so, Sir,
I am

I am your's, and that fair lady's very humble servant—Ha, ha, ha!

[Exit WILLIAM.

Fur. If I had not resolv'd not to be in a passion this first of May, the festival of our Village, I should have sent him to the bottom of our horse-pond; but I can't help laughing neither, you have done it so featly—How the poor boy was taken in; he! he! he!—fine frolick, faith! And now, Miss, I will open my mind more to you; why should we lose a hundred pounds?—I'll marry you to day—the better day, the better deed.—What say you, my little Gipsy?

Gip. It will make a great noise!

Fur. I love a noise—what is any body good for, without noise—besides we shall be the happiest couple for a hundred miles round.

Gip. Not while your son is miserable—make him happy first, and then nobody can blame you.

Fur. What a sweet creature you are! Don't trouble your head about such a fellow, I'll turn him out of the house to seek his fortune, and so he'll be provided for.

Gip. If he is not happy, I shall be miserable, nor would I be a Queen at the expence of another's happiness, for all the world.

Far. What a sweet creature you are!—and how happy shall I be; the rascal shall know your kindness to him, and how little he deserves it—it shall be done, and the Village shall know it is all your doings. And here they come! now for it! I am ten times happier than I was this morning!

Enter all the Lads and Lasses.

Come, where is my son, where is Scapegrace?

Clod. Here, Master William!

Enter W I L L I A M.

Here's Scapegrace, Sir.

Far. Now you shall know what a fine lady this is, or rather how unlike a fine lady she is. This pilferer, wretch, baggage, and so on—she vows not to be made happy till you are so—and so being prevail'd upon by her—and her alone—I give you my consent to marry the girl you were so fond of; or any girl of character, and before all my neighbours here, on this joyful holiday, the first of May, and I likewise consent to give you the Bilberry-farm, to maintain her and my grand children.

Wm. If you indulge my inclination, I have no right to find fault with your's—
be

be my choice where it will, you will be satisfy'd.

Fur. More than satisfy'd—I will rejoice at it, and reward it—name the party, boy.

[The girls stand all round with great seeming anxiety.]

Wm. I always did obey you, and will now. *[Looking at, and passing by the other girls,]* This—this is my choice.

takes the Little Gipsy by the hand.]

Clod. Zooks! here's a fine over-turn in a horse-pond. *[Aside.]*

Fur. He's crack'd, sure!

Wm. I was, Sir, and almost broken hearted; but your kindness, consent, and generosity, have made me a man again, and thus we thank you. *[They kneel to him.]*

Fur. This is some may-game—do you know her?—and does she know you?

Wm. We have known each other long—this is she, father, I saw, lov'd, and was betroth'd to; but your command separated us for a time—in my absence to London, she was here under the name of Belton; you saw her often, and lik'd her, nay lov'd her—it was our innocent device, that you might see her merits, and not think 'em unworthy of your son——You over-run our expectations, and we delay'd the discovery till this, we hope, happy moment.

Clod. You must forgive 'em, measter.

All.

All. To be sure.

Fur. I can't—I am trick'd and cheated
—I can't recal the farm; but I can, and
I will—— [*Walks about angrily.*]

Clod. Be more foolish if you please—
you have trick'd, and cheated yourself,
measter—but heav'n has been kind to you,
and set all to rights again——

GIPSY.

[*Addressing herself to FURROW.*]

I.

*Love reigns this season, makes his choice,
And shall not we with birds rejoice?*

*O calm your rage, hear nature say,
Be kind with me the first of May.*

II.

*Would you, like misers, hate to bless,
Keep wealth from youth you can't possess?
To nature hark, you'll hear her say,
Be kind with me the first of May.*

III.

*Oh! then be bounteous, like the spring,
Which makes creation sport and sing,
With nature let your heart be gay,
And both be kind this first of May.*

Fur. I won't be sung out of my
senses——

Enter

Enter DOZEY, drunk.

Doz. Where is he? where is the bridegroom? I have it, I have it—October has done it!—it has inspir'd me! and the legacy shall be old George Furrow's, or I will never taste October again—I have got you the money, old boy!

[Claps him on the shoulder.]

Fur. You are got drunk, you old fool, and I don't want the money. *[Sulky.]*

Doz. What, you are sick of marriage, and don't want the wife perhaps—did not I tell you, it was not *fit*? was not I *free* enough to tell you so?—it is not *fit*.

Fur. This drunken old fool compleats my misery.

Doz. Old fool! what Mr. Pot, do you abuse your friend kettle?—old fool am I?—now judge, neighbours—I have been drinking *October* to make this a joyful May-Day, and he wants to marry a young girl to turn it into sackcloth and ashes—who's old fool now?

Fur. Take him away.

Doz. I shall take myself away—Lasses, if any of you long for the legacy, and are not engag'd, I am your man—that old fellow, there, would have married a child in sober sadness; but I have been courting a good bottle of *October*, and now, having
lost

lost my senses, I am *free* and *fit* to marry
any body—— [Exit reeling.]

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Fur. Where's Dolly?—was she in this
plot?

Wm. In that part of it you gave her:
she perform'd the old Gipsy to a miracle,
as these lasses can testify, and then went
home to prepare the May feast.

Fur. I will have no feast. [Sulky.]

Jen. Was she the old Gipsy?

Bet. It is all a dream to me!

Fur. I can't come to rights again.——

[The lads and lasses push the Gipsy
and William towards him, saying
—to him, to him.]

Clod. Never was known such a thing as
ill-nature and unkindness in our village,
on the first of May, for these ten thousand
years.

FINAL E.

C L O D.

Shall our hearts on May-day,

Lack and a well a day!

Want their recreation?

No, no, no, it can't be so,

Love with us must bud and blow,

Unblighted by vexation.

W I L-

WILLIAM.

*Shall a maid on May-day,
Lack and a well a day!
Die of desperation?
No, no, no, for pity's sake,
To your care a couple take,
And give 'em consolation.*

GIPSY.

*Shall a youth on May-day,
Lack and a well a day!
Lament a separation?
No, no, no, the lad is true,
Let him have of love his due,
Indulge his inclination.*

FURROW.

*Shall my heart on May-day,
Lack and a well a day!
Refuse its approbation?
No, no, no, within our breast,
Rage, revenge, and such like guests,
Shou'd ne'er have habitation.*

WILLIAM and GIPSY.

*We no more on May-day,
O, what a happy day!
Shall never know vexation:
No, no, no, your worth we'll sing,
Join your name to bounteous spring,
In kind commemoration!*

GRAND

318 MAY-DAY: OR, &c.

GRAND CHORUS.

*"Cold winter will fly,
"When spring's warmer sky,
"The charms of young nature display;
"When the heart is unkind,
"With the frost of the mind,
"Benevolence melts it like May."*

F I N I S.

GRAND

THE
SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

A
COMEDY.

Dramatis Personae.

M E N.

General SAVAGE.	Captain SAVAGE.
BELVILLE.	CONNOLLY.
TORRINGTON.	SPRUCE.
LEESON.	GHASTLY.

WOMEN.

Miss WALSING-	Lady RACHEL
HAM.	MILDEW.
Mrs. BELVILLE.	Mrs. TEMPEST.
LEE.	Miss LEESON.

M A I D.

THE
SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

ACT I.

SCENE, *an Apartment at BELVILLE'S.*

*Enter Captain SAVAGE, and Miss
WALSINGHAM.*

Capt. HA! ha! ha! Well, Miss Walsingham, this fury is going; what a noble peal she has rung in Belville's ears!

Miss Wal. Did she see you, Captain Savage?

Capt. No, I took care of that; for tho' she is'n't married to my father, she has ten times the influence of a wife, and might injure me not a little with him, if I didn't support her side of the question.

Miss Wal. It was a pleasant conceit of Mr. Belville, to insinuate the poor woman was disordered in her senses!—

Capt. And did you observe how the termagant's violence of temper, supported the probability of the charge?

Miss Wal. Yes, she became almost frantic in reality, when she found herself treated like a madwoman.

Capt. Belville's affected surprise too, was admirable!

Miss Wal. Yes, the hypocritical composure of his countenance, and his counterfeit pity for the poor woman, were intolerable!

Capt. While that amiable creature, his wife, implicitly believed every syllable he said—

Miss Wal. And felt nothing but pity for the accuser, instead of paying the least regard to the accusation. But pray, is it really under a pretence of getting the girl upon the stage, that Belville has taken away Mrs. Tempest's niece from the people she boarded with?

Capt. It is: Belville, ever on the look out for fresh objects, met her in those primitive regions of purity, the Green-Boxes; where, discovering that she was passionately desirous of becoming an actress, he improved his acquaintance with her, in the fictitious character of an Irish manager, and she eloped last night, to be, as she imagines, the heroine of a Dublin theatre.

Miss Wal. So, then, as he has kept his real name artfully conceal'd, Mrs. Tempest can

can at most but suspect him of Miss Lee-son's seduction.

Capt. Of no more; and this, only, from the description of the people who saw him in company with her at the play; but, I wish the affair may not have a serious conclusion; for she has a brother, a very spirited young fellow, who is a council in the Temple, and who will certainly call Belville to an account, the moment he hears of it.

Miss Wal. And what will become of the poor creature after he has deserted her?

Capt. You know that Belville is generous to profusion, and has a thousand good qualities to counterbalance this single fault of gallantry, which contaminates his character.

Miss Wal. You men! you men!—You are such wretches that there's no having a moment's satisfaction with you! and what's still more provoking, there's no having a moment's satisfaction without you!

Capt. Nay, don't think us all alike.

Miss Wal. I'll endeavour to deceive myself; for it is but a poor argument of your sincerity, to be the confidant of another's falsehood.

Capt. Nay, no more of this, my love; no people live happier than Belville and his wife; nor is there a man in England,

notwithstanding all his levity, who considers his wife with a warmer degree of affection: if you have a friendship therefore, for her, let her continue in an error, so necessary to her repose, and give no hint, whatever, of his gallantries to any body.

Miss Wal. If I had no pleasure in obliging you, I have too much regard for Mrs. Belville, not to follow your advice; but you need not enjoin me so strongly on the subject, when you know I can keep a secret.

Capt. You are all goodness; and the prudence with which you have conceal'd our private engagements, has eternally oblig'd me; had you trusted the secret even to Mrs. Belville, it wou'dn't have been safe; she wou'd have told her husband, and he is such a rattleskul, that, notwithstanding all his regard for me, he wou'd have mention'd it in some moment of levity, and sent it in a course of circulation to my father.

Miss Wal. The peculiarity of your father's temper, join'd to my want of fortune, made it necessary for me to keep our engagements inviolably secret; there is no merit, therefore, either in my prudence, or in my labouring assiduously to cultivate the good opinion of the General; since both were so necessary to my own
happi-

happiness; don't despise me for this acknowledgement now.

Capt. Bewitching softness!—But your goodness, I flatter myself, will be speedily rewarded; you are now such a favourite with him, that he is eternally talking of you; and I really fancy he means to propose you to me himself: for, last night, in a few minutes after he had declared you would make the best wife in the world, he seriously ask'd me if I had any aversion to matrimony?

Miss Wal. Why, that was a very great concession indeed, as he seldom stoops to consult any body's inclinations.

Capt. So it was, I assure you; for, in the army, being used to nothing but command and obedience, he removes the discipline of the parade into his family, and no more expects his orders shou'd be disputed, in matters of a domestic nature, than if they were deliver'd at the head of his regiment.

Miss Wal. And yet, Mrs. Tempest, who you say is as much a storm in her nature as her name, is disputing them eternally.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. BELVILLE.

Bel. Well, Miss Walsingham, hav'n't we had a pretty morning's visitor?

Miss Wal. Really, I think so; and I have been asking Capt. Savage, how long the lady has been disordered in her senses?

Bel. Why will they let the poor woman abroad, without some body to take care of her?

Capt. O, she has her lucid intervals.

Miss Wal. I declare I shall be as angry with you as I am with Belville.

[*Aside to the Captain.*]

Mrs. Bel. You can't think how sensibly she spoke at first.

Bel. I should have had no conception of her madness, if she hadn't brought so preposterous a charge against me.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Lady Rachel Mildew, Madam, sends her compliments, and if you are not particularly engaged, will do herself the pleasure of waiting upon you.

Mrs. Bel. Our compliments, and we shall be glad to see her Ladyship.

[*Exit SERVANT.*]

Bel. I wonder if Lady Rachel knows that Torrington came to town last night from Bath!

Mrs. Bel. I hope he has found benefit by the waters, for he is one of the best creatures existing; he's a downright parson Adams, in good nature and simplicity.

Miss

Miss Wal. Lady Rachel will be quite happy at his return, and it would be a laughable affair, if a match could be brought about between the old maid and the old bachelor.

Capt. Mr. Torrington is too much taken up at Westminster-Hall, to think of paying his devoirs to the ladies; and too plain a speaker, I fancy, to be agreeable to Lady Rachel.

Bel. You mistake the matter widely; she is deeply smitten with him; but honest Torrington is utterly unconscious of his conquest, and modestly thinks that he has not a single attraction for any woman in the universe.

Mrs. Bel. Yet my poor aunt speaks sufficiently plain, in all conscience, to give him a different opinion of himself.

Miss Wal. Yes, and puts her charms into such repair, whenever she expects to meet him, that her cheeks look for all the world like a raspberry ice upon a ground of custard.

Capt. I thought *Apollo* was the only god of Lady Rachel's idolatry, and that in her passion for poetry she had taken leave of all the less elevated affections.

Bel. O, you mistake again; the poets are eternally in love, and can by no means be calculated to describe the imaginary

passions, without being very susceptible of the real ones.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. The man, Madam, from Tavistock-street, has brought home the dresses for the masquerade, and desires to know if there are any commands for him.

Mrs. Bel. O, bid him stay till we see the dresses. *[Exit SERVANT.*

Miss Wal. They are only Dominos.

Bel. I am glad of that; for characters are as difficult to be supported at the masquerade, as they are in real life. The last time I was at the Pantheon, a vestal virgin invited me to sup with her, and swore that her pocket had been pick'd by a Justice of peace.

Miss Wal. Nay, that was not so bad, as the Hamlet's Ghost that box'd with Henry the Eighth, and afterwards danc'd a hornpipe to the tune of Nancy Dawson. Ha! ha! ha!—We follow you, Mrs. Belleville. *[Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to* LEESON'S Chambers *in the Temple.*

Enter LEESON.

Leef. Where is this clerk of mine? Connolly!

Con. *[Behind.]* Here, Sir!

Leef.

Leef. Have you copied the marriage settlement, as I corrected it?

Con. [*Enters with pistols*] Ay, honey, an hour ago.

Leef. What, you have been trying those pistols?

Con. By my soul, I have been firing them this half hour, without once being able to make them go off.

Leef. They are plaguy dirty.

Con. In troth, so they are: I strove to brighten them up a little, but some misfortune attends every thing I do, for the more I clane them, the dirtier they are, honey.

Leef. You have had some of our usual daily visitors for money, I suppose?

Con. You may say that; and three or four of them are now hanging about the door, that I wish handsomely hang'd any where else, for bodering us.

Leef. No joking, Connolly! my present situation is a very disagreeable one.

Con. Faith, and so it is; but who makes it disagreeable? your Aunt Tempest would let you have as much money as you please, but you won't condescend to be acquainted with her, though people in this country can be very intimate friends, without seeing one anothers faces for seven years.

Leef. Do you think me base enough to receive a favour from a woman, who has disgraced

disgraced her family, and stoops to be a kept mistress? you see, my sister is already ruin'd by a connection with her.

Con. Ah, Sir, a good guinea isn't the worse for coming through a bad hand; if it was, what would become of us lawyers? and by my soul, many a high head in London would, at this minute, be very low, if they hadn't recieved favours even from much worse people than kept mistresses.

Leef. Others, Connolly, may prostitute their honour, as they please; mine is my chief possession, and I must take particular care of it.

Con. Honour, to be sure, is a very fine thing, Sir; but I don't see how it is to be taken care of, without a little money; your honour, to my knowledge, has'n't been in your own possession these two years, and the devil a crum can you honestly swear by, till you get it out of the hands of your creditors.

Leef. I have given you a licence to talk, Connolly, because I know you faithful; but I hav'n't given you a liberty to sport with my misfortunes.

Con. You know I'd die to serve you, Sir; but of what use is your giving me leave to spake, if you oblige me to hould my tongue? 'tis out of pure love and affection that I put you in mind of your misfortunes.

Leef.

Leef. Well, Connolly, a few days will, in all probability, enable me to redeem my honour, and to reward your fidelity; the lovely Emily, you know, has half consented to embrace the first opportunity of flying with me to Scotland, and the paltry trifles I owe, will not be miss'd in her Fortune.

Con. But, dear Sir, consider you are going to fight a duel this very evening, and if you shou'd be kilt, I fancy you will find it a little difficult, to run away afterwards with the lovely Emily.

Leef. If I fall, there will be an end to my misfortunes.

Con. But surely it will not be quite genteel, to go out of the world without paying your debts.

Leef. But how shall I stay in the world, Connolly, without punishing Belville for ruining my sister?

Con. O, the devil fly away with this honour; an ounce of common sense, is worth a whole ship load of it, if we must prefer a bullet or a halter, to a fine young lady and a great fortune.

Leef. We'll talk no more on the subject at present. Take this letter to Mr. Belville; deliver it into his own hand, be sure; and bring me an answer: make haste; for I shall not stir out till you come back.

Con.

Con. By my soul, I wish you may be able to stir out then, honey.—O, but that's true!

Leef. What's the matter?

Con. Why, Sir, the gentleman I last liv'd clerk with, died lately and left me a legacy of twenty guineas—

Leef. What! is Mr. Stanley dead?

Con. Faith, his friends have behav'd very unkindly if he is not, for they have buried him these six weeks.

Leef. And what then?

Con. Why, Sir, I received my little legacy this morning, and if you'd be so good as to keep it for me, I'd be much oblig'd to you.

Leef. Connolly, I understand you, but I am already shamefully in your debt: you've had no money from me this age.—

Con. O Sir, that does not signify; if you are not kilt in this damn'd duel, you'll be able enough to pay me: if you are, I shan't want it.

Leef. Why so, my poor fellow?

Con. Because, tho' I am but your clerk, and tho' I think fighting the most foolish thing upon earth, I'm as much a gentleman as yourself, and have as much right to commit a murder in the way of duelling.

Leef. And what then? You have no quarrel with Mr. Belville?

Con.

Con. I shall have a damn'd quarrel with him tho' if you are kilt: your death shall be reveng'd, depend upon it, so let that content you.

Leef. My dear Connolly, I hope I shan't want such a proof of your affection.——
How he distresses me!

Con. You will want a second, I suppose, in this affair: I stood second to my own brother, in the Fifteen Acres, and tho' that has made me detest the very thought of duelling ever since; yet if you want a friend, I'll attend you to the field of death with a great deal of satisfaction.

Leef. I thank you, Connolly, but I think it extremely wrong in any man who has a quarrel, to expose his friend to difficulties; we shou'dn't seek for redress, if we are not equal to the task of fighting our own battles: and I choose you particularly, to carry my letter because, you may be supposed ignorant of the contents, and thought to be acting only in the ordinary course of your business.

Con. Say no more about it, honey; I will be back with you presently. [*Going, returns.*] I put the twenty guineas in your pocket, before you were up, Sir; and I don't believe you'd look for such a thing there, if I wasn't to tell you of it. [*Exit.*]

Leef. This faithful, noble-hearted creature!—but let me fly from thought; the
business

business I have to execute, will not bear the test of reflection. *[Exit.]*

Re-enter CONNOLLY.

Con. As this is a challenge, I shou'dn't go without a sword; come down, little tickle-pitcher. *[Takes a sword.]* Some people may think me very conceited now; but as the dirtiest black legs in town can wear one without being stared at, I don't think it can suffer any disgrace by the side of an honest man. *[Exit.]*

SCENE *changes to an Apartment at*
BELVILLE'S.

Enter Mrs. BELVILLE.

Mrs. Bel. How strangely this affair of Mrs. Tempest hangs upon my spirits, tho' I have every reason, from the tenderness, the politeness, and the generosity of Mr. Belville, as well as from the woman's behaviour, to believe the whole charge the result of a disturb'd imagination.—Yet suppose it should be actually true:—heigho!—well, suppose it shou'd;—I wou'd endeavour—I think I wou'd endeavour to keep my temper:—a frowning face never recovered a heart that was not to be fix'd with a smiling one:—but women, in general, forget this grand article of the matrimonial creed entirely; the dignity of
insulted

insulted virtue obliges them to play the fool, whenever their Corydons play the libertine;—and poh! they must pull down the house about the traitor's ears, tho' they are themselves to be crush'd in pieces by the ruins.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Lady Rachel Mildew, madam.

[Exit SERVANT.]

Enter Lady RACHEL MILDREW.

Lady Rach. My dear, how have you done since the little eternity of my last seeing you. Mr. Torrington is come to town, I hear.

Mrs. Bel. He is, and must be greatly flattered to find that your Ladyship has made him the hero of your new comedy.

Lady Rach. Yes, I have drawn him as he is, an honest practitioner of the law; which is I fancy no very common character—

Mrs. Bel. And it must be a vast acquisition to the Theatre.

Lady Rach. Yet the managers of both houses have refused my play; have refused it peremptorily! tho' I offer'd to make them a present of it.

Mrs. Bel. That's very surprizing, when you offer'd to make them a present of it.

Lady

Lady Rach. They alledge that the audiences are tired of crying at comedies; and insist that my Despairing Shepherdess is absolutely too dismal for representation.

Mrs. Bel. What, tho' you have introduced a lawyer in a new light?

Lady Rach. Yes, and have a boarding-school romp, that flaps her mother's face, and throws a bason of scalding water at her governess.

Mrs. Bel. Why, surely, these are capital jokes!

Lady Rach. But the managers can't find them out.—However, I am determined to bring it out somewhere; and I have discover'd such a treasure for my boarding-school romp, as exceeds the most sanguine expectation of criticism.

Mrs. Bel. How fortunate!

Lady Rach. Going to Mrs. Le Blond, my millener's, this morning, to see some contraband silks, for you know there's a foreign minister just arriv'd, I heard a loud voice rehearsing Juliet, from the dining-room; and upon enquiry found that it was a country girl, just elop'd from her friends in town, to go upon the stage with an Irish manager.

Mrs. Bel. Ten to one, the strange woman's neice, who has been here this morning.

[*Aside.*
Lady

Lady Rach. Mrs. Le Blond has some doubts about the manager it seems, though she hasn't seen him yet, because the apartments are very expensive, and were taken by a fine gentleman out of livery.

Mrs. Bel. What am I to think of this? —Pray, Lady Rachel, as you have convers'd with this young actress, I suppose you could procure me a sight of her.

Lady Rach. This moment if you will, I am very intimate with her already; but pray keep the matter a secret from your husband, for he is so witty, you know, upon my passion for the drama, that I shall be teized to death by him.

Mrs. Bel. O, you may be very sure that your secret is safe, for I have a most particular reason to keep it from Mr. Belville; but he is coming this way with Captain Savage, let us at present avoid him.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter BELVILLE, *and* Captain SAVAGE.

Capt. You are a very strange man, Belville; you are for ever tremblingly solicitous about the happiness of your wife, yet for ever endangering it by your passion for variety.

Bel. Why, there is certainly a contradiction between my principles and my practice; but, if ever you marry, you'll

be able to reconcile it perfectly. Possession, Savage! O, possession, is a miserable whetter of the appetite in love! and I own myself so sad a fellow, that though I wou'dn't exchange Mrs. Belville's mind for any woman's upon earth, there is scarcely a woman's person upon earth, which is not to me a stronger object of attraction.

Capt. Then perhaps in a little time you'll be weary of Miss Leeson?

Bel. To be sure I shall; though to own the truth, I have not yet carried my point conclusively with the little monkey.

Capt. Why how the plague has she escap'd a moment in your hands?

Bel. By a mere accident.—She came to the lodgings, which my man Spruce prepar'd for her, rather unexpectedly last night, so that I happened to be engaged particularly in another quarter—you understand me—and the damn'd aunt found me so much employment all the morning, that I could only send a message by Spruce, promising to call upon her the first moment I had to spare in the course of the day.

Capt. And so you are previously satisfied that you shall be tired of her.

Bel. Tir'd of her?—Why I am at this moment in pursuit of fresh game, against the hour of satiety:—Game that you know

know to be exquisite! and I fancy I shall bring it down, though it is closely guarded by a deal of that pride, which passes for virtue with the generallity of your mighty good people.

Capt. Indeed! and may a body know this wonder?

Bel. You are to be trusted with any thing, for you are the closest fellow I ever knew, and the rack itself would hardly make you discover one of your own secrets to any body—what do you think of Miss Walsingham?

Capt. Miss Walsingham?—Death and the devil! *[Aside.*

Bel. Miss Walsingham.

Capt. Why surely she has not received your addresses with any degree of approbation I cou'd expect.

Capt. She has?

Bel. Ay: Why this news surprises you?

Capt. It does indeed!

Bel. Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing to think what a happy dog Miss Walsingham's husband is likely to be!

Capt. A very happy dog, truly!

Bel. She's a delicious girl, isn't she, Savage?—but she'll require a little more trouble;—for a fine woman, like a fortified town, to speak in your father's language, demands a regular siege; and we must even allow her the honours of war,

to magnify the greatness of our own victory.

Capt. Well, it amazes me how you gay fellows ever have the presumption to attack a woman of principle; Miss Walsingham has no apparent levity of any kind about her.

Bel. No; but she continued in my house, after I had whispered my passion in her ear, and gave me a second opportunity of addressing her improperly; what greater encouragement cou'd I desire?

Enter SPRUCE.

Well, Spruce, what are your commands?

Spruce. My Lady is just gone out with Lady Rachel, Sir.

Bel. I understand you.

Spruce. I believe you do. [*Aside.*] [*Exit.*

Capt. What is the English of these significant looks between Spruce and you?

Bel. Only that Miss Walsingham is left alone, and that I have now an opportunity of entertaining her; you must excuse me, Savage; you must upon my soul; but not a word of this affair to any body; because when I shake her off my hands, there may be fools enough to think of her, upon terms of honourable matrimony.

[*Exit.*
Capt.

Capt. So, here's a discovery! a precious discovery! and while I have been racking my imagination, and sacrificing my interest, to promote the happiness of this woman, she has been listening to the addresses of another; to the addresses of a married man! the husband of her friend, and the immediate friend of her intended husband!——By Belville's own account, however, she has not yet proceeded to any criminal lengths——But why did she keep the affair a secret from me? or why did she continue in his house after a repeated declaration of his unwarrantable attachment?——What's to be done?——If I open my engagement with her to Belville, I am sure he will instantly desist;—but then her honour is left in a state extremely questionable——It shall be still concealed——While it remains unknown, Belville will himself tell me every thing;—and doubt, upon an occasion of this nature, is infinitely more insupportable than the downright falsehood of the woman whom we love. [Exit.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *an Apartment in General SAVAGE'S House.*

Enter General SAVAGE, and TORRINGTON.

Gen. ZOUNDS! Torrington, give me quarter, when I surrender up my sword: I own that for these twenty years, I have been suffering all the inconveniences of marriage, without tasting any one of its comforts, and rejoicing in an imaginary freedom, while I was really grovelling in chains.

Tor. In the dirtiest chains upon earth; —yet you wou'dn't be convinc'd, but laugh'd at all your married acquaintance as slaves, when not one of them put up with half so much from the worst wife, as you were oblig'd to crouch under, from a kept mistress.

Gen. 'Tis too true. But, you know, she sacrificed much for me;—you know that she was the widow of a colonel, and refus'd two very advantageous matches on my account.—

Tor. If she was the widow of a judge, and had refused a high chancellor, she
was

was still a devil incarnate, and you were of course a madman to live with her.

Gen. You don't remember her care of me when I have been sick.—

Tor. I recollect, however, her usage of you in health, and you may easily find a tenderer nurse, when you are bound over by the gout or the rheumatism.

Gen. Well, well, I agree with you that she is a devil incarnate; but I am this day determin'd to part with her for ever.

Tor. Not you indeed.

Gen. What, don't I know my own mind?

Tor. Not you indeed, when she is in the question; with every body else, your resolution is as unalterable as a determination in the house of peers; but Mrs. Tempest is your fate, and she reverses your decrees with as little difficulty as a fraudulent debtor now-a-days procures his certificate under a commission of bankruptcy.

Gen. Well if, like the Roman Fabius, I conquer by delay, in the end, there will be no great reason to find fault with my generalship. The proposal of parting now comes from herself.

Tor. O, you darn't make it for the life of you.

Gen. You must know that this morning we had a smart cannonnading on Belville's

account, and she threatens, as I told you before, to quit my house if I don't challenge him for taking away her neice.

Tor. That fellow is the very devil among the women, and yet there isn't a man in England fonder of his wife.

Gen. Poh, if the young minx hadn't surrender'd to him, she would have capitulated to somebody else, and I shall at this time be doubly obliged to him, if he is any ways instrumental in getting the aunt off my hands.

Tor. Why at this time?

Gen. Because to shew you how fix'd my resolution is to be a keeper no longer, I mean to marry immediately.

Tor. And can't you avoid being press'd to death, like a felon who refuses to plead, without incurring a sentence of perpetual imprisonment?

Gen. I fancy you would yourself have no objection to a perpetual imprisonment in the arms of Miss Walsingham.

Tor. But have you any reason to think that upon examination in a case of love, she would give a favourable reply to your interrogatories?

Gen. The greatest—do you think I'd hazard such an engagement without being perfectly sure of my ground? Notwithstanding my present connection won't suffer me to see a modest woman at my own

own house—She always treats me with particular attention whenever I visit at Belville's, or meet her any where else—If fifty young fellows are present, she directs all her assiduities to the old soldier, and my son has a thousand times told me that she professes the highest opinion of my understanding.

Tor. And truly you give a notable proof of your understanding, in thinking of a woman almost young enough to be your grand-daughter.

Gen. Nothing like an experienc'd chief to command in any garrison.

Tor. Recollect the state of your present citadel.

Gen. Well, if I am blown up by my own mine, I shall be the only sufferer—There's another thing I want to talk of, I am going to marry my son to Miss Moreland.

Tor. Miss Moreland!—

Gen. Belville's sister.

Tor. O, ay, I remember that Moreland had got a good estate to assume the name of Belville.

Gen. I have'nt yet mention'd the matter to my son; but I settled the affair with the girl's mother yesterday, and she only waits to communicate it to Belville, who is her oracle, you know.

Tor.

Tor. And are you sure the captain will like her?

Gen. I am not so unreasonable as to insist upon his liking her, I shall only insist upon his marrying her.

Tor. What, whether he likes her or not?

Gen. When I issue my orders, I expect them to be obey'd; and don't look for an examination into their propriety.

Tor. What a delightful thing it must be to live under a military government, where a man is not to be troubled with the exercise of his understanding.

Gen. Miss Moreland has thirty thousand pounds—That's a large sum of ammunition money.

Tor. Ay, but a marriage merely on the score of fortune, is only gilding the death-warrant sent down for the execution of a prisoner. However as I know your obstinate attachment to what you once resolve, I shan't pretend to argue with you; where are the papers which you want me to consider?

Gen. They are in my library—File off with me to the next room and they shall be laid before you—But first I'll order the chariot, for the moment I have your opinion, I purpose to sit down regularly before Miss Walsingham—who waits there?

Enter

Enter a SERVANT.

Gen. Is Mrs. Tempest at home?

Ser. Yes, Sir, just come in, and just going out again.

Gen. Very well; order the chariot to be got ready.

Ser. Sir, one of the pannels was broke last night at the Opera-house.

Gen. Sir, I didn't call to have the pleasure of your conversation, but to have obedience paid to my orders.

Tor. Go order the chariot, you block-head.

Ser. With the broken pannel, Sir.

Gen. Yes, you rascal, if both pannels were broke, and the back shattered to pieces.

Ser. The coachman thinks that one of the wheels is damag'd, Sir.

Gen. Don't attempt to reason, you dog, but execute your orders.—Bring the chariot without the wheels—if you can't bring it with them.

Tor. Ay bring it, if you reduce it to a fledge, and let your master look like a malefactor for high treason, on his journey to Tyburn.

Enter Mrs. TEMPEST.

Mrs. Temp. General Savage, is the house to be for ever a scene of noise with your domineering?—The chariot shan't be

be brought—it won't be fit for use 'till it is repaired—and John, shall drive it this very minute to the coach-makers.

Gen. Nay, my dear, if it isn't fit for use that's another thing.

Tor. Here's the experienced chief that's fit to command in any garrison. [*Aside.*]

Gen. Go order me the coach then.
[*to the SER.*]

Mrs. Temp. You can't have the coach.

Gen. And why so, my love.

Mrs. Temp. Because I want it for myself.—Robert, get a hack for your master—tho' indeed I don't see what business he has out of the house.

[*Exeunt Mrs. TEMTEST and Robert.*]

Tor. When you issue your orders, you expect them to be obey'd, and don't look for an examination into their propriety.

Gen. The fury!——this has steel'd me against her for ever, and nothing on earth can now prevent me from drumming her out immediately.

Mrs. Temp. [*Behind.*] An unreasonable old fool—But I'll make him know who governs this house!

Gen. Zounds! here she comes again; she has been lying in ambuscade, I suppose, and has over heard us.

Tor. What if she has? you are steel'd against her for ever.

Gen.

Gen. No, she's not coming—she's going down stairs;—and now, dear Torrington, you must be as silent as a sentinel on an out-post about this affair. If that virago was to hear a syllable of it, she might perhaps attack Miss Walsingham in her very camp, and defeat my whole plan of operations.

Tor. I thought you were determin'd to drum her out immediately. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to* BELVILLE'S.

Enter Miss WALSINGHAM, followed by BELVILLE.

Miss Wal. I beg, Sir, that you will insult me no longer with solicitations of this nature—Give me proofs of your sincerity indeed! What proofs of sincerity can your situation admit of, if I could be even weak enough to think of you with partiality at all?

Bel. If our affections, Madam, were under the government of our reason, circumstanced as I am, this unhappy bosom wouldn't be torn by passion for Miss Walsingham.—Had I been bless'd with your acquaintance, before I saw Mrs. Belville, my hand as well as my heart, wou'd have been humbly offer'd to your acceptance—fate, however, has ordered it otherwise, and it is cruel to reproach me with that situation

situation as a crime, which ought to be pitied as my greatest misfortune.

Miss Wal. He's actually forcing tears into his eyes.—However, I'll mortify him severely. [Aside.]

Bel. But such proofs of sincerity as my situation can admit of, you shall yourself command, as my only business in existence is to adore you.

Miss Wal. His only business in existence to adore me. [Aside.]

Bel. Prostrate at your feet, my dearest Miss Walsingham [*kneeling*] behold a heart eternally devoted to your service.—You have too much good sense, Madam, to be the slave of custom, and too much humanity not to pity the wretchedness you have caused.—Only, therefore, say that you commiserate my sufferings—I'll ask no more—and surely that may be said, without any injury to your purity, to snatch even an enemy from distraction—where's my handkerchief? [Aside.]

Miss Wal. Now to answer in his own way, and to make him ridiculous to himself—[aside.] If I thought, if I could think [*affecting to weep*] that these protestations were real.

Bel. How can you, Madam, be so unjust to your own merit? how can you be so cruelly doubtful of my solemn asseverations?

tions?—Here I again kneel, and swear eternal love!

Miss Wal. I don't know what to say—but there is one proof—[*affecting to weep.*]

Bel. Name it, my angel, this moment, and make me the happiest of mankind!

Miss Wal. Swear to be mine for ever.

Bel. I have sworn it a thousand times, my charmer; and I will swear it to the last moment of my life.

Miss Wal. Why then—but don't look at me I beseech you—I don't know how to speak it—

Bel. The delicious emotion—do not check the generous tide of tenderness that fills me with such extasy.

Miss Wal. You'll despise me for this weakness.

Bel. This weakness——this generosity which will demand my everlasting gratitude.

Miss Wal. I am a fool—but there is a kind of fatality in this affair—and I do consent to go off with you.

Bel. Eternal blessings on your condescension.

Miss Wal. You are irresistible, and I am ready to fly with you to any part of the world.

Bel. Fly to any part of the world indeed—you shall fly by yourself then; [*aside.*] You are the most lovely, the most tender creature

creature in the world, and thus again let me thank you: O, Miss Walsingham, I cannot express how happy you've made me!——But where's the necessity of our leaving England?——

Miss Wal. I thought he wouldn't like to go abroad—[*aside.*] That I may possess the pleasure of your company unrival'd.

Bel. I must cure her of this taste for travelling— [*Aside.*]

Miss Wal. You don't answer, Mr. Belville?

Bel. Why I was turning the consequence of your proposal in my thoughts, as going off—going off—you know.——

Miss Wal. Why going off, you know, is going off—And what objections can you have to going off?

Bel. Why going off, will subject you at a certainty, to the slander of the world; whereas by staying at home, we may not only have numberless opportunities of meeting, but at the same time prevent suspicion it self, from ever breathing on your reputation.

Miss Wal. I didn't dream of your starting any difficulties, Sir.——Just now I was dearer to you than all the world.

Bel. And so you are, by heav'n!

Miss Wal. Why won't you sacrifice the world then at once to obtain me?

Bel.

Bel. Surely, my dearest life, you must know the necessity, which every man of honour is under of keeping up his character?

Miss Wal. So, here's this fellow swearing to ten thousand lies, and yet talking very gravely about his honour and his character. [*Aside.*] Why, to be sure in these days, Mr. Belville, the instances of conjugal infidelity are so very scarce, and men of fashion are so remarkable for a tender attachment to their wives, that I don't wonder at your circumspection—But do you think I can stoop to accept you by halves, or admit of any partnership in your heart?

Bel. O you must do more than that, if you have any thing to say to me. [*Aside.*] Surely, Madam, when you know my whole soul unalterable your own, you will permit me to preserve those appearances with the world, which are indispensibly requisite——Mrs. Belville is a most excellent woman, however it may be my fortune to be devoted to another—Her happiness, besides, constitutes a principal part of my felicity, and if I was publicly to forsake her, I should be hunted as a monster from society,

Miss Wal. Then, I suppose, it is by way of promoting Mrs. Belville's repose, Sir, that you make love to other women;

and by way of shewing the nicety of your honour, that you attempt the purity of such as your own roof, peculiarly, intitles to protection. For the honour intended to me—thus low to the ground, I thank you, Mr. Belville.

Bel. Laugh'd at, by all the stings of mortification!

Miss Wal. Good bye.—Don't let this accident mortify your vanity too much;—but take care, the next time you vow everlasting love, that the object is neither tender enough to sob—sob—at your distress; nor provoking enough to make a proposal of leaving England.—How greatly a little common sense can lower these fellows of extraordinary impudence? [*Exit.*]

Bel. [*Alone.*] So then, I am fairly taken in, and she has been only diverting herself with me all this time:—however, lady fair, I may chance to have the laugh in a little time on my side; for if you can sport in this manner about the flame, I think it must in the run lay hold of your wings:—what shall I do in this affair?—she sees the matter in its true light, and there's no good to be expected from thumping of bosoms, or squeezing white handkerchiefs;—no these won't do with women of sense, and in a short time, they'll be ridiculous to the very babies of a boarding-school.

Enter

Enter Captain SAVAGE.

Capt. Well, Belville, what news? You have had a fresh opportunity with Miss Walsingham.

Bel. Why, faith, Savage, I've had a most extraordinary scene with her, and yet have but little reason to brag of my good fortune, tho' she offer'd in express terms to run away with me.

Capt. Prith'ee explain yourself, man; she cou'dn't surely be so shameless!

Bel. O, her offering to run away with me, was by no means the worst part of the affair.

Capt. No, then it must be damn'd bad indeed! but prith'ee, hurry to an explanation.

Bel. Why then, the worst part of the affair is, that she was laughing at me the whole time; and made this proposal of an elopement, with no other view, than to shew me in strong colours to myself, as a very dirty fellow to the best wife in England.

Capt. I am easy. *[Aside.*

Enter SPRUCE.

Spruce. Sir, there is an Irish gentleman below with a letter for you, who will deliver it to nobody but yourself.

Bel. Shew him up then.

Spruce. Yes, Sir. *[Exit.*

Capt. It may be on business Belville, I'll take my leave of you.

Bel. O, by no means; I can have no business which I desire to keep from you, tho' you are the arrant'st miser of your confidence upon earth, and wou'd rather trust your life in any body's hands, than even a paltry amour with the apprentice of a millener.

Enter CONNOLLY.

Con. Gentlemin, your most obedient; pray which of you is Mr. Belville?

Bel. My name is Belville, at your service, Sir.

Con. I have a little bit of a letter for you, Sir.

Bel. [*Reads.*]

S I R,

The people where Miss Leeson lately lodg'd, asserting positively that you have taken her away in a fictitious character, the brother of that unhappy girl, thinks himself oblig'd to demand satisfaction, for the injury which you have done his family; tho' a stranger to your person, he is sufficiently acquainted with your reputation for spirit, and shall, therefore, make no doubt of seeing you with a case of pistols, near the Ring in Hyde Park, at eight o'clock this evening, to answer the claims of

To Craggs Belville, Esq. George Leeson.

Capt.

Capt. Eight o'clock in the evening! 'tis a strange time!

Con. Why so, honey? A fine evening is as good a time for a bad action as a fine morning; and if a man of sense can be such a fool as to fight a duel, he shou'd never sleep upon the matter, for the more he thinks of it, the more he must feel himself asham'd of his resolution.

Bel. A pretty letter!

Con. O yes, an invitation to a brace of bullets is a very pretty thing.

Bel. For a challenge, however, 'tis very civilly written!

Con. Faith, if it was written to me, I shou'dn't be very fond of such civility; I wonder he doesn't sign himself, your most obedient servant.

Capt. I told you Leeson's character, and what wou'd become of this damn'd business; but your affairs—are they settled, Belville?

Bel. O they are always settled—for as this is a country where people occasionally die, I take constant care to be prepared for contingencies.

Con. Occasionally die!——I'll be very much oblig'd to you; Sir, if you tell me the country where people do not die? for I'll immediately go and end my days there.

Bel. Ha! ha! ha!

Con. Faith, you may laugh gintlemin, but tho' I am a foolish Irishman, and come about a foolish piece of business, I'd prefer a snug birth in this world, bad as it is, to the finest coffin in all Christendom.

Bel. I am surpris'd, Sir, that thinking in this manner, you would be the bearer of a challenge.

Con. And well you may, Sir.—But we must often take a pleasure in serving our friends, by doing things that are very disagreeable to us.

Capt. Then you think Mr. Leeson much to blame, perhaps, for hazarding his life where he can by no means repair the honour of his sister.

Con. Indeed and I do—But I shall think this gintleman, begging his pardon, much more to blame for meeting him.

Bel. And why so, Sir—You woudn't have me disappoint your friend?

Con. Faith, and that I wou'd—He, poor lad, may have some reason at present to be tir'd of the world, but you have a fine estate, a fine wife, a fine parcel of children.—In short, honey, you have every thing to make you fond of living, and the devil burn me, was I in your case, if I'd stake my own happiness against the misery of any man.

Bel. I am very much oblig'd to your advice, Sir, tho' on the present occasion I cannot

cannot adopt it; be so good as to present my compliments to your friend, and tell him I shall certainly do myself the honour of attending his appointment.

Con. Why then upon my soul I am very sorry for it.

Capt. 'Tis not very customary, Sir, with gentlemen of Ireland to oppose an affair of honour.

Con. They are like the gintlemin of England, Sir, they are brave to a fault; yet I hope to see the day that it will be infamous to draw the swords of either, against any body but the enemies of their country. [Exit.

Bel. I am quite charmed with this honest Hibernian, and would almost fight a duel for the pleasure of his acquaintance.

Capt. Come, step with me a little, and let us consider, whether there may not be some method of accommodating this cursed business.

Bel. Poh! don't be uneasy upon my account; my character, with regard to affairs of this nature, is unhappily too well established, and you may be sure that I shan't fight with Leeson.

Capt. No——you have injured him greatly?

Bel. The very reason of all others why I should not cut his throat. [Exeunt.

Enter SPRUCE.

Spruce. What, the devil, this master of mine has got a duel upon his hands! Zounds! I am sorry for that; he is a prince of a fellow! and a good subject must always love his prince, though he may now and then be a little out of humour with his actions.

Enter General SAVAGE.

Gen. Your hall-door standing open, Spruce, and none of your sentinels being on guard, I have surpris'd your camp thus far without resistance: Where is your master?

Spruce. Just gone out with Captain Savage, Sir.

Gen. Is your lady at home?

Spruce. No, Sir, but Miss Walsingham is at home; shall I inform her of your visit?

Gen. There is no occasion to inform her of it, for here she is, Spruce.

[*Exit SPRUCE.*

Enter Miss WALSINGHAM.

Miss Wal. General Savage, your most humble servant.

Gen. My dear Miss Walsingham, it is rather cruel that you should be left at home by yourself, and yet I am greatly rejoic'd to find you at present without company.

Miss

Miss Wal. I can't but think myself in the best company, when I have the honour of your conversation, General.

Gen. You flatter me too much, Madam; yet I am come to talk to you on a serious affair, Miss Walsingham; an affair of importance to me and to yourself: Have you leisure to favour me with a short audience, if I beat a parley?

Miss Wal. Any thing of importance to you, Sir, is always sufficient to command my leisure.—'Tis as the Captain suspected.

[*Aside.*

Gen. You tremble, my lovely girl, but don't be alarmed; for though my business is of an important nature, I hope it won't be of a disagreeable one.

Miss Wal. And yet I am greatly agitated.

[*Aside.*
Gen. Soldiers, Miss Walsingham, are said to be generally favour'd by the kind partiality of the ladies.

Miss Wal. The ladies are not without gratitude, Sir, to those who devote their lives peculiarly to the service of their country.

Gen. Generously said, Madam: Then give me leave, without any masked battery, to ask, if the heart of an honest soldier is a prize at all worth your acceptance.

Miss

Miss Wal. Upon my word, Sir, there's no masked battery in this question.

Gen. I am as fond of a coup de main, Madam, in love, as in war, and hate the tedious method of sapping a town, when there is a possibility of entering sword in hand.

Miss Wal. Why really, Sir, a woman may as well know her own mind, when she is first summoned by the trumpet of a lover, as when she undergoes all the tiresome formality of a siege. — You see I have caught your own mode of conversing, General.

Gen. And a very great compliment I consider it, Madam: But now that you have candidly confess'd an acquaintance with your own mind, answer me with that frankness for which every body admires you so much. Have you any objection to change the name of Walsingham?

Miss Wal. Why then frankly, General Savage, I say, no.

Gen. Ten thousand thanks to you for this kind declaration.

Miss Wal. I hope you won't think it a forward one.

Gen. I'd sooner see my son run away in the day of battle;—I'd sooner think Lord Russell was bribed by Lewis the XIVth, and sooner villify the memory of Algonoon Sidney.

Miss

Miss Wal. How unjust it was ever to suppose the General a tyrannical father!

[*Aside.*

Gen. You have told me condescendingly, Miss Walsingham, that you have no objection to change your name, I have but one question more to ask,

Miss Wal. Pray propose it.

Gen. Would the name of Savage be disagreeable to you?—Speak frankly again, my dear girl!

Miss Wal. Why then again I frankly say, no.

Gen. You make me too happy; and though I shall readily own, that a proposal of this nature would come with more propriety from my son—

Miss Wal. I am much better pleas'd that you make the proposal yourself, Sir.

Gen. You are too good to me.—Torington thought that I should meet with a repulse.

[*Aside.*

Miss Wal. Have you communicated this business to the Captain, Sir?

Gen. No, my dear Madam, I did not think that at all necessary. I have always been attentive to the Captain's happiness, and I propose that he shall be married in a few days.

Miss Wal. What, whether I will or no?

Gen. O you can have no objection.

Miss

Miss Wal. I must be consulted, however, about the day, General: but nothing in my power shall be wanting to make him happy.

Gen. Obliging loveliness!

Miss Wal. You may imagine, that if I was not previously impressed in favour of your proposal, it wou'd not have met my concurrence so readily.

Gen. Then you own that I had a previous friend in the garrison.

Miss Wal. I don't blush to acknowledge it, when I consider the accomplishments of the object, Sir.

Gen. O this is too much, Madam; the principle merit of the object is his passion for Miss Walsingham.

Miss Wal. Don't say that, General, I beg of you, for I don't think there are many women in the kingdom, who could behold him with indifference.

Gen. Ah, you flattering, flattering angel!—and yet, by the memory of Marlborough, my lovely girl, it was the idea of a prepossession on your part, which encouraged me to hope for a favourable reception.

Miss Wal. Then I must have been very indiscreet, for I labour'd to conceal that prepossession as much as possible.

Gen. You cou'dn't conceal it from me! you cou'dn't conceal it from me!—The
female

female heart is a field which I am thoroughly acquainted with, and which has more than once been a witness to my victories, Madam.

Miss Wal. I don't at all doubt your success with the ladies, General; but as we now understand one another so perfectly, you will give me leave to retire.

Gen. One word, my dear creature, and no more; I shall wait upon you sometime to day, with Mr. Torrington, about the necessary settlements.

Miss Wal. You must do as you please, General, you are invincible in every thing.

Gen. And if you please, we'll keep every thing a profound secret, 'till the articles are all settled, and the definitive treaty ready for execution.

Miss Wal. You may be sure, that delicacy will not suffer me to be communicate on the subject, Sir.

Gen. Then you leave every thing to my management.

Miss Wal. I can't trust a more noble negotiator. [Exit.

Gen. The day's my own. [Sings.] Britons, strike home! strike home! Revenge, &c. [Exit singing.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

A C T III.

SCENE, *Miss LEESON's Lodgings.**Enter Lady RACHEL MILDEW, Mrs. BELVILLE, and Miss LEESON.*

Lady Rach. WELL, Mrs. Belville, I am extremely glad you agree with me, in opinion of this young lady's qualifications for the stage. Don't you think she'd play Miss Headstrong admirably in my comedy?

Mrs. Bel. Yes, indeed, I think she possesses a natural fund of spirit, very much adapted to the character.—'Tis impossible, surely, that this hoyden can have a moment's attraction for Mr. Belville? [*Aside.*

Miss Leef. You are very obliging, ladies; but I have no turn for comedy; my fort is tragedy entirely.

Alphonso!——O, *Alphonso!* to thee I call, &c.

Lady Rach. But, my dear, is there none of our comedies to your taste?

Miss Leef. O, yes; some of the sentimental ones are very pretty, there's such little difference between them and tragedies.

Lady

Lady Rach. And pray, my dear, how long have you been engaged to Mr. Frankly?

Miss Leef. I only came away last night, and hav'n't seen Mr. Frankly since, tho' I expect him every moment.

Mrs. Bel. Last night! just as Mrs. Tempest mentioned. *[Aside.*

Lady Rach. You had the concurrence of your friends?

Miss Leef. Not I, Madam. Mr. Frankly said, I had too much genius to mind my friends, and as I should want nothing from them, there was no occasion to consult them in the affair.

Lady Rach. Then Osbaldiston is not your real name, perhaps?

Miss Leef. O no, nor do I tell my real name: I chose Osbaldiston, because it was a long one, and wou'd make a striking appearance in the bills.

Mrs. Bel. I wish we cou'd see Mr. Frankly.

Miss Leef. Perhaps you may, Madam, for he designs to give me a lesson every day, 'till we are ready to set off for Ireland.

Lady Rach. Suppose then, my dear, you wou'd oblige us with a scene in Juliet, by way of shewing your proficiency to Mrs. Belville.

Miss Leef. Will you stand up for Romeo?

Lady

Lady Rach. With all my heart, and I'll give you some instructions.

Miss Leef. I beg pardon, Ma'am; I'll learn to act under nobody but Mr. Frankly. This room is without a carpet; if you will step into the next, ladies, I'll endeavour to oblige you.

Shall I not be environed, distraught——

This way, Ladies.

Lady Rach. Pray, Madam, shew us the way. [*Exeunt Miss LEES. and Lady RACH.*]

Mrs. Bel. I'll prolong this mummary as much as possible, in hopes the manager may come. Lye still, poor fluttering heart! it cannot be the lord of all your wishes! it cannot surely be your ador'd Belville! [*Exit.*]

Re-enter Miss LEESON.

Miss Leef. Hav'n't I left my Romeo and Juliet here? O yes, there it is.

Enter BELVILLE.

Bel. ———O, were those eyes in heav'n,
They'd thro' the starry regions stream so
bright,

That birds wou'd sing, and think it was the
morn!

Miss Leef. Ah, my dear Mr. Frankly! I am so glad you are come! I was dying to see you.

Bel.

Bel. Kiss me, my dear;—why didn't you send me word of your intention to come away last night?

Miss Leef. I hadn't time: but as I knew where the lodgings were, I thought I shou'd be able to find you by a note to the coffee-house I always directed to.

Bel. Kiss me again, my little sparkler!

Miss Leef. Nay, I won't be kiss'd in this manner; for tho' I am going on the stage, I intend to have some regard for my character. But, ha, ha, ha, I am glad you are come now: I have company above stairs.

Bel. Company! that's unlucky at this time, for I wanted to make you intirely easy about your character. [*Aside.*] And pray, my dear, who is your company? You know we must be very cautious for fear of your relations.

Miss Leef. O, they are only ladies.—But one of them is the most beautiful creature in the world!

Bel. The devil she is!

Miss Leef. An earth-treading star, that makes dim heav'ns light.

Bel. Zounds! I'll take a peep at the star, who knows but I may have an opportunity of making another actress. [*Aside.*]

Miss Leef. Come, charmer! charmer!

Bel. ————— Wer't thou as far
As that vast shore, wash'd by the farthest sea,
I wou'd adventure for such merchandize.

370 THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

Now let's see what fortune has sent us
above stairs. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE *changes to a Dining-room at*
Miss LEESON'S.

Mrs. BELVILLE and Lady RACHEL
discover'd.

Mrs. Bel. This is a most ignorant young
creature, Lady Rachel.

Lady Rach. Why I think she is—did
you observe how she slighted my offer of
instructing her?

Enter Miss LEESON.

Miss Leef. Ladies!—ladies!—here he
is! here is Mr. Frankly!

Enter BELVILLE, bowing very low, not
seeing the Ladies.

Bel. Ladies, your most obedient.

Mrs. Bel. Let me, if possible, recollect
myself—Sir, your most obedient humble
servant.

Bel. Zounds! let me out of the house.

Lady Rach. What do I see!

Miss Leef. You seem, ladies, to know
this gentleman?

Mrs. Bel. *[Taking hold of him]* You
shan't go renegade—You laugh'd at my
credulity this morning, and I must now
laugh at your embarrassment.

Bel.

Bel. What a kind thing it would be in any body to blow out my stupid brains?

Lady Rach. I'll mark this down for an incident in my comedy.

Miss Leef. What do you hang your head for Mr. Frankley?

Bel. Be so good as to ask that lady, my dear.—The Devil has been long in my debt, and now he pays me home with a witness.

Mrs. Bel. What a cruel thing it is to let Mrs. Tempest out, my love, without somebody to take care of her!

Miss Leef. What, do you know Mrs. Tempest, madam?

Mrs. Bel. Yes, my dear;—and I am pretty well acquainted with this gentleman.

Miss Leef. What isn't this gentleman the manager of a play-house in Ireland?

Bel. The curtain is almost dropt my dear; the farce is nearly over, and you'll be speedily acquainted with the catastrophe.

Enter Mrs. TEMPEST.

Mrs. Temp. Yes, Sir, the curtain is almost dropt: I have had spies to watch your haunts, and the catastrophe ends in your detection.—Come, you abandon'd slut,——

Miss Leef. And have I elop'd after all, without being brought upon the stage?

Mrs. Temp. I don't know that you would be brought upon the stage; but I am sure you were near being brought upon the town. I hope, madam, for the future, you'll set me down a mad-woman.

[*To Mrs. BELVILLE.*

Mrs. Bel. Mr. Belville, you'll make my apologies to this lady, and acknowledge that I think her perfectly in her senses.

Bel. I wish that I had intirely lost mine.

Lady Rach. [*Writing*] *I wish that I had entirely lost mine.* A very natural wish, in such a situation.

Mrs. Temp. Come, you audacious minx, come away. You shall be sent into Yorkshire this very evening; and see what your poor mother will say to you, hussy.

Miss Leef. I will go on the stage, if I die for't; and 'tis some comfort there's a play-house at York.

[*Exit Mrs. TEMPEST and Miss LEES.*

Bel. Nancy, I am so ashamed, so humbled, and so penitent, that if you knew what passes here, I am sure you wou'd forgive me.

Mrs. Bel. My love, tho' I cannot say I rejoice in your infidelity, yet, believe me, I pity your distress: let us therefore think no more of this.

Lady Rach. [*Writing.*] *And think no more of this.*—This conduct is new in a wife, and very dramatic.

Bel.

Bel. Where, my angel, have you acquired so many requisites to charm with?

Mrs. Bel. In your society, my dear; and believe me——that a wife may be as true a friend as any bottle companion upon earth, tho' she can neither get merry with you over night, nor blow out your brains about some foolish quarrel in the morning.

Bel. If wives knew the omnipotence of virtue, where she wears a smile upon her face, they'd all follow your bewitching example, and make a faithless husband quite an incredible character.

Lady Rach. Quite an incredible character!
——Let me set down that. [*Writing*].
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to General SAVAGE'S.

Enter GENERAL and CAPTAIN.

Gen. Yes, Horace, I have been just visiting at Belville's.

Capt. You found nobody at home, but Miss Walsingham?

Gen. No, but I'd a long conversation with her, and upon a very interesting subject.

Capt. 'Tis as I guess'd. [*Aside.*]

Gen. She is a most amiable creature, Horace.

Capt. So she is, Sir, and will make any man happy that marries her.

Gen. I am glad you think so.

Capt. He's glad I think so!——'tis plain,—but I must leave every thing to himself, and seem wholly passive in the affair.

[*Aside.*

Gen. A married life after all, Horace, I am now convinced is the most happy, as well as the most reputable.

Capt. It is indeed, Sir.

Gen. Then perhaps you wou'd have no objection to be married, if I offered you as agreeable a young woman as Miss Walsingham.

Capt. 'Twou'd be my first pride on every occasion, Sir, to pay an implicit obedience to your commands.

Gen. That's sensibly said, Horace, and obligingly said; prepare yourself therefore for an introduction to the lady in the morning.

Capt. Is the lady prepar'd to receive me, Sir?

Gen. O yes; and you can't think how highly delighted Miss Walsingham appeared, when I acquainted her with my resolution on the subject.

Capt. She's all goodness!

Gen. The more I know her, the more I am charm'd with her; I must not be explicit with him yet, for fear my secret should

should get wind, and reach the ears of the enemy. *[Aside.*

Gen. I propose, Horace, that you should be married immediately.

Capt. The sooner the better, Sir, I have no will but your's.

Gen. *[Shaking hands with him.]* By the memory of Malbro', you are a most excellent boy!——But what do you think? Miss Walsingham insists upon naming the day.

Capt. And welcome, Sir; I am sure she won't make it a distant one.

Gen. O she said, that nothing in her power shou'd be wanting to make you happy.

Capt. I am sure of that, Sir.

Gen. *[A loud knocking]* Zounds, Horace! here's the disgrace and punishment of my life: Let's avoid her as we would a fever in the camp.

Capt. Come to the library, and I'll tell you how whimsically she was treated this morning at Belville's.

Gen. Death and the devil! make haste. O I must laugh at marriage, and be curst to me! But I am providing, Horace, against your falling into my error.

Capt. I am eternally indebted to you, Sir. *[Exeunt.*

SCENE, BELVILLE'S House.

Enter Mrs. BELVILLE and Lady RACHEL.

Lady Rach. Nay, Mrs. Belville, I have no patience, you act quite unnaturally.

Mrs. Bel. What! because I am unwilling to be miserable?

Lady Rach. This new instance of Mr. Belville's infidelity——This attempt to seduce Miss Walsingham, which your woman overheard, is unpardonable!

Mrs. Bel. I don't say but that I am strongly wounded by his irregularities. Yet if Mr. Belville is unhappily a rover, I wou'd much rather that he should have twenty mistresses than one.

Lady Rach. You astonish me!

Mrs. Bel. Why, don't you know, my dear madam, that while he is divided amidst a variety of objects, 'tis impossible for him to have a serious attachment?

Lady Rach. Lord, Mrs. Belville! how can you speak with so much composure! a virtuous woman should be always outrageous upon such an occasion as this.

Mrs. Bel. What, and weary the innocent sun and moon from the firmament, like a despairing princess in a tragedy—No—no—Lady Rachel, 'tis bad enough to be indifferent to the man I love, without studying to excite his aversion.

Lady

Lady Rach. How glad I am that Miss Walsingham made him so heartily ashamed of himself: Lord, these young men are so full of levity: Give me an husband of Mr. Torrington's age, say I.

Mrs. Bel. And give me a husband of Mr. Belville's, say I, with all his follies: However, Lady Rachel, I am pretty well satisfied that my conduct at Miss Leeson's will have a proper effect upon Mr. Belville's generosity, and put an entire end to his galantries for the future.

Lady Rach. Don't deceive yourself, my dear.—The gods in the shilling gallery would sooner give up Roast Beef, or go without an epilogue on the first night of a new piece.

Mrs. Bel. Why should you think so of such a man as Mr. Belville?

Lady Rach. Because Mr. Belville is a man: However, if you dare run the risk—we will try the sincerity of his reformation.

Mrs. Bel. If I dare run the risk! I would stake my soul upon his honour.

Lady Rach. Then your poor soul would be in a very terrible situation.

Mrs. Bel. By what test can we prove his sincerity?

Lady Rach. By a very simple one. You know I write so like Miss Walsingham, that our hands are scarcely known asunder.

Mrs.

Mrs. Bel. Well——

Lady Rach. Why then let me write to him as from her——

Mrs. Bel. If I did not think it would look like a doubt of his honour——

Lady Rach. Poh! dare you proceed upon my plan?——

Mrs. Bel. Most confidently: Come to my dressing-room, where you'll find every thing ready for writing, and then you may explain your scheme more particularly.

Lady Rach. I'll attend you, but I am really sorry, my dear, for the love of propriety, to see you so calm under the perfidy of your husband; you should be quite wretched——indeed you should. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *the Temple.*

Enter LEESON.

Lees. The hell-hounds are after me.

Enter CONNOLLY, at the opposite side.

Fly, open the chambers this moment, the bailiffs are in sight.

Con. Faith and that I will; but it will be of no use to fly a step, if I hav'n't the key.

Lees. Zounds! did not you lock the door?

Con. Yes; but I believe I left the key on the inside: However, I see no more than
than

than three people, and think we could beat them to their hearts content in three minutes.

Leef. What! and fly in the face of the law?

Con. To be sure you have a great regard for the law, when you are going to fight a duel!

Leef. S'death! is this a time to talk? Stay here, and throw every possible impediment in the way of these execrable rascals. [Going.]

Con. Holloa! honey, come back: These execrable rascals are very worthy people, I fancy, for they are quietly turning down the next court.

Leef. Their appearance alarm'd me beyond measure.

Con. O you shou'dn't judge by outside shew, my dear; for there is no being a complete rogue, without the appearance of an honest man.

Leef. Circumstanced as I am at present, every thing terrifies me; for should I be arrested, the consequence would possibly be fatal, both to my honour and my love. —Belville would proclaim me publicly a coward; and Emily set me down as a base, a mercenary adventurer, who was solely attracted by her fortune.

Con. Why faith, honey, like yourself, they might be apt to judge by appearances.

Leef.

Leef. O, Connolly, a man of spirit should learn prudence from his very pride, and consider every unnecessary debt he contracts as a wanton diminution of his character! the moment he makes another his creditor—he makes himself a slave! He runs the hazard of insults, which he never can resent, and of disgraces which are seldom to be mitigated! He incurs the danger of being dragg'd, like the vilest felon to the felon's prison! and, such is the depravity of the world, that guilt is even more likely to meet with advocates, than misfortune! [Exit LEESON.

Con. Musha, long life to you, ould Shillala!—I wish I had any thing besides my carcase to venture for you, for that's nothing; yet you are as welcome to it as the flowers in May. Poor lad! I don't wonder that he is so much afraid of a prison, for to be sure it is a blessed place to live in; and a blessed law it must be, which coops a man up from every chance of getting money, by way of making him pay his debts—But now let my thick skull consider, if there is any method of preventing this infernal duel. Suppose I have him bound over to the pace! No, that will never do—it would be a shameful thing for a gentleman to keep the pace! Besides, I must appear in the business, and people may think, from my connexion
with

with him, that he has not honour enough to throw away his life: Suppose I go another way to work, and send an anonymous letter about the affair to Mrs. Belville: They say, though she is a woman of fashion, that no creter upon earth can be fonder of her husband. Surely the good genius of Ireland put this scheme into my head—I'll about it this minute; and if there's only one of them kept from the field, I don't think that the other can be much hurt, when there will be no body to fight with him. *[Exit.]*

SCENE, *changes to Captain SAVAGE's Lodgings.*

Enter Captain SAVAGE and BELVILLE.

Capt. Why, faith, Belville, your detection, and so speedily too, after all the pretended sanctity of the morning, must have thrown you into a most humiliating situation.

Bel. Into the most distressing you can imagine: had my wife rav'd at my falsehood, in the customary manner, I cou'd have brazen'd it out pretty tollerably; but the angel-like sweetness, with which she bore the mortifying discovery, planted daggers in my bosom, and made me at that time wish her the veriest vixen in the whole creation.

Capt.

Capt. Yet, the suffering forbearance of a wife, is a quality for which she is seldom allow'd her merit; we think it her duty to put up with our falsehood, and imagine ourselves exceedingly generous in the main, if we practise no other method of breaking her heart.

Bel. Monstrous! monstrous! from this moment I bid an everlasting adieu to my vices: the generosity of my dear girl——

Enter a SERVANT to BELVILLE.

Ser. Here's a letter, Sir, which Mr. Spruce has brought you.

Bel. Give me leave, Savage.—Zounds! what an industrious devil the father of darkness is, when the moment a man determines upon a good action, he sends such a thing as this, to stagger his resolution.

Capt. What have you got there?

Bel. You shall know presently. Will you let Spruce come in.

Capt. Where have you acquir'd all this ceremony?

Bel. Bid Spruce come in.

Ser. Yes, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Capt. Is that another challenge?

Bel. 'Tis upon my soul, but it came from a beautiful enemy, and dares me to give a meeting to Miss Walsingham.

Capt. How!

Enter

Enter SPRUCE.

Bel. Pray, Spruce, who gave you this letter?

Spruce. Miss Walsingham's woman, Sir: she said it was about very particular business, and therefore I wou'dn't trust it by any of the footmen.

Capt. O, damn your diligence. [*Aside*

Bel. You may go home, Spruce.

Spruce. [*Looking significantly at his Master.*] Is there no answer necessary, Sir.

Bel. I shall call at home myself, and give the necessary answer.

Spruce. [*Aside.*] What can be the matter with him all of a sudden, that he is so cold upon the scent of wickedness? [*Exit.*

Capt. And what answer do you propose making to it, Belville?

Bel. Read the letter, and then tell me what I shou'd do.—You know Miss Walsingham's hand.

Capt. O, perfectly!—This is not—yes, it is her hand!—I have too many curst occasions to know it. [*Aside.*

Bel. What are you a muttering about?—Read the letter.

Capt. If you are not entirely discouraged, by our last conversation, from renewing the subject which then gave offence——

Bel. Which then gave offence.—You see, Savage, that it is not offensive any longer.

Capt.

Capt. Sdeath! you put me out—you may at the masquerade, this evening——

Bel. You remember how earnest she was for the masquerade party.

Capt. Yes, yes, I remember it well:—and I remember, also, how hurt she was this morning, about the affair of Miss Leeson. [*Aside.*]——have an opportunity of entertaining me——O the strumpet! [*Aside.*

Bel. But mind the cunning with which she signs the note, for fear it shou'd by any accident fall into improper hands.

Capt. Ay, and you put it into very proper hands. [*Aside.*] I shall be in the blue domino —The signature is——

YOU KNOW WHO.

Bel. Yes, you know who.

Capt. May be, however, she has only written this to try you.

Bel. To try me, for what purpose? But if you read a certain postscript there, I fancy you'll be of a different opinion.

Capt. If Mr. Belville has any house of character to retire to, it wou'd be most agreeable, as there cou'd be no fear of interruption.

Bel. What do you say now?—Can you recommend me to any house of character, where we shall be free from interruption.

Capt. O, curse her house of character! [*Aside.*] But surely, Belville, after your late determin'd resolution to reform—

Bel.

Bel. Zounds! I forgot that.

Capt. After the unexampled sweetness of your wife's behaviour—

Bel. Don't go on, Savage: There is something here [*putting his hand upon his bosom*] which feels already not a little awkwardly.

Capt. And can you still persist?

Bel. I am afraid to answer your question.

Capt. Where the plague are you flying?

Bel. From the justice of your censure, Horace; my own is sufficiently severe; yet I see that I shall be a rascal again, in spite of my teeth; and good advice is only thrown away upon so incorrigible a libertine. [*Exit.*]

Capt. [*Alone*] So then this diamond of mine proves a counterfeit after all, and I am really the veriest wretch existing at the moment in which I conceiv'd myself the peculiar favourite of fortune. O the cursed, cursed sex! I'll see her once more to upbraid her with her falsehood, then acquaint my father with her perfidy, to justify my breaking off the marriage, and tear her from my thoughts for ever.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Sir! Sir! Sir!—

Capt. Sir, Sir, Sir,—What the devil's the matter with the booby?

Ser. Miss Walsingham, Sir!

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Capt. Ah! what of her?

Ser. Was this moment overturn'd at Mr. Belville's door, and John tells me carried in a fit into the house.

Capt. Ha! let me fly to her assistance.
[Exit.

Ser. Ha let me fly to her assistance—O, are you thereabouts.
[Exit.

SCENE changes to Mr. BELVILLE'S.

*Enter Mrs. BELVILLE, Miss WAL-
SINGHAM and Lady RACHEL
MILDEW.*

Mrs. Bel. But are you indeed recover'd my dear?

Miss Wal. Perfectly my dear,—I wasn't in the least hurt, tho' greatly terrified, when the two fools of coachmen contended for the honour of being first, and drove the carriages together with a violence incredible.

Lady Rach. I sincerely rejoice at your escape; and now Mrs. Belville, as you promised to choose a dress for me if I went in your party to the masquerade this evening, can you spare a quarter of an hour to Tavistock-Street?

Mrs. Bel. I am loth to leave Miss Walsingham alone, Lady Rachel, so soon after her fright.

Miss

Miss Wal. Nay, I insist that you don't stay at home upon my account; and Lady Rachel's company to the masquerade is a pleasure I have such an interest in, that I beg you won't delay a moment to oblige her.

Mrs. Bel. Well, then I attend your ladyship.

Lady Rach. You are very good; and so is Miss Walsingham. [Exit.

Miss Wal. I wonder Captain Savage stays away so long! where can he be all this time?—I die with impatience to tell him of my happy interview with the General.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Captain Savage, madam.

Miss Wal. Shew him in. [Exit SERV.]
How he must rejoice to find his conjectures so fortunately realiz'd.

Enter CAPTAIN SAVAGE.

Capt. So, madam, you have just escap'd a sad accident.

Miss Wal. And by that agreeable tone and countenance, one would almost imagine you were very sorry for my escape.

Capt. People, madam, who doubt the kindness of others, are generally conscious of some defect in themselves.

Miss Wal. Don't madam me, with this accent of indifference. What has put you out of humour?

Capt. Nothing.

Miss Wal. Are you indispos'd?

Capt. The Crocodile! the Crocodile!

[*Aside.*

Miss Wal. Do you go to the masquerade to night?

Capt. No, but you do.

Miss Wal. Why not? come, don't be ill-natur'd, I'm not your wife yet.

Capt. Nor ever will be, I promise you.

Miss Wal. What is the meaning of this very whimsical behaviour?

Capt. The settled composure of her impudence is intolerable. [*Aside.*] Madam, Madam, how have I deserv'd this usage?

Miss Wal. Nay, Sir, Sir, how have I deserved it, if you go to that?

Capt. The letter, madam!——the letter!

Miss Wal. What letter?

Capt. Your letter, inviting a gallant from the masquerade to a house of character, madam!——What, you appear surpriz'd?

Miss Wal. Well I may, at so shameless an aspersion.

Capt. Madam, madam, I have seen your letter! Your new lover cou'dn't keep your secret a moment. But I have nothing

thing to do with you,—and only come to declare my reasons for renouncing you everlastingly!

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. General Savage, madam.

Miss Wal. Shew him up. [*Exit SERV.*] I am glad he is come, Sir; inform him of your resolution to break off the match, and let there be an end of every thing between us.

Enter General SAVAGE.

Gen. The news of your accident reach'd me but this moment, madam,———or I shou'd have posted much sooner to reconnoitre your situation. My aid de camp, however, has not been inattentive I see, and I dare say his diligence will not be the least lessen'd, when he knows his obligations to you.

Capt. O, Sir, I am perfectly sensible of my obligations; and the consciousness of them, was one motive of my coming here.

Gen. Then you have made your acknowledgements to miss Walsingham I hope.

Miss Wal. He has indeed, General, said a great deal more than was necessary.

Gen. That opinion proceeds from the liberality of your temper; for 'tis impossible

possible he can ever say enough of your goodness.

Capt. So it is; if you knew but all, Sir.

Gen. Why who can know more of the matter than myself?

Miss Wal. This gentleman, it seems, has something, General Savage, very necessary for your information.

Gen. How's this?

Capt. Nay, Sir, I only say, that for some particular reasons, which I shall communicate to you at a more proper time, I must beg leave to decline the lady whose hand you kindly intended for me this morning.

Gen. O you must!—Why then I hope you decline at the same time, all pretensions to every shilling of my fortune. It is not in my power to make you fight, you poltroon, but I can punish you for cowardice.

Miss Wal. Nay, but General, let me interpose here. If he can maintain any charge against the lady's reputation, 'twould be very hard that he should be disinherited, for a necessary attention to his honour.

Capt. And if I don't make the charge good, I submit to be disinherited without murmuring.

Gen. 'Tis false as hell! the lady is infinitely too good for you, in every respect;

spect; and I undervalued her worth, when I thought of her for your wife.

Miss Wal. I am sure the lady is much oblig'd to your favourable opinion, Sir.

Gen. Not in the least, Madam; I only do her common justice.

Capt. I cannot bear that you shou'd be displeas'd a moment, Sir; suffer me therefore to render the conversation less equivocal, and a few words will explain every thing.

Gen. Sirrah, I'll hear no explanation; ar'n't my orders that you shou'd marry?

Miss Wal. For my sake hear him, General Savage.

Capt. Madam, I disdain every favour that is to be procur'd by your interposition. [Exit.

Miss Wal. This matter must not be suffer'd to proceed farther tho', provokingly, cruelly as the Captain has behav'd. [Aside.

Gen. What's that you say, my bewitching girl?

Miss Wal. I say that you must make it up with the Captain, and the best way will be to hear his charge patiently.

Gen. I am shock'd at the brutality of the dog; he has no more principle than a futtler, and no more steadiness than a young recruit upon drill. But, you shall have ample satisfaction:—this very day I'll cut him off from a possibility of suc-

ceeding to a shilling of my fortune. He shall be as miserable as——

Miss Wal. Dear General, do you think that this wou'd give me any satisfaction?

Gen. How he became acquainted with my design I know not, but I see plainly, that his mutiny proceeds from his aversion to my marrying again.

Miss Wal. To your marrying again, Sir! why shou'd he object to that?

Gen. Why, for fear I should have other children, to be sure.

Miss Wal. Indeed, Sir, it was not from that motive; and, if I can overlook his folly, you may be prevail'd upon to forgive it.

Gen. After what you have seen, justice shou'd make you a little more attentive to your own interest, my lovely girl.

Miss Wal. What at the expence of his?

Gen. In the approaching change of your situation, there may be a family of your own.

Miss Wal. Suppose there shou'd, Sir; won't there be a family of his too?

Gen. I care not what becomes of his family.

Miss Wal. But, pray let me think a little about it, General.

Gen. 'Tis hard, indeed, when I was so desirous of promoting his happiness, that
he

he should throw any thing in the way of mine.

Miss Wal. Recollect, Sir, his offence was wholly confin'd to me.

Gen. Well, my love, and isn't it throwing an obstacle in the way of my happiness, when he abuses you so grossly for your readiness to marry me?

Miss Wal. Sir!——

Gen. I see, with all your good nature, that this is a question you cannot rally against.

Miss Wal. It is indeed, Sir.——What will become of me? [*Aside.*]

Gen. You seem suddenly disordered, my love?

Miss Wal. Why really, Sir, this affair affects me strongly.

Gen. Well, it is possible, that for your sake, I may not punish him with as much severity as I intended: In about an hour I shall beg leave to beat up your quarters again, with Mr. Torrington; for 'tis necessary I should shew you some proof of my gratitude, since you have been so kindly pleas'd to honour me with a proof of your affection.

Miss Wal. [*Aside*] So, now indeed, we're in a hopeful situation. [*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT

ACT IV.

SCENE, *an Apartment at BELVILLE'S.*

Enter Mrs. BELVILLE, and Captain SAVAGE.

Mrs. Bel. **D**ON'T argue with me, Captain Savage; but consider that I am a wife, and pity my distraction.

Capt. Dear Madam, there is no occasion to be so much alarm'd; Mr. Belville has very properly determin'd not to fight; he told me so himself, and should have been effectually prevented, if I hadn't known his resolution.

Mrs. Bel. There is no knowing to what extremities he may be provok'd, if he meets Mr. Leeson; I have sent for you, therefore, to beg that you will save him from the possibility, either of exposing himself to any danger, or of doing an injury to his adversary.

Capt. What would you have me do, Madam?

Mrs. Bel. Fly to Hyde-park, and prevent, if yet possible, his meeting with Mr.

Mr. Leeson: Do it, I conjure you, if you'd save me from desperation.

Capt. Though you have no reason whatever to be apprehensive for his safety, Madam, yet, since you are so very much affected, I'll immediately execute your commands. [Exit.

Mrs. Bel. Merciful heaven! where is the generosity, where is the sense, where is the shame of men, to find a pleasure in pursuits, which they cannot remember without the deepest horror; which they cannot follow without the meanest fraud; and which they cannot effect, without consequences the most dreadful? The single word, Pleasure, in a masculine sense, comprehends every thing that is cruel; every thing that is base; and every thing that is desperate: Yet men, in other respects, the noblest of their species, make it the principal business of their lives, and do not hesitate to break in upon the peace of the happiest families, though their own must be necessarily expos'd to destruction. — O Belville! Belville! — my life! my love! — The greatest triumph which a libertine can ever experience, is too despicable to be envied; 'tis at best nothing but a victory over his own humanity; and if he is a husband, he must be dead indeed, if he is not doubly tortured upon the wheel of recollection.

Enter

Enter Miss WALSINGHAM and Lady RACHEL MILDEW.

Miss Wal. My dear Mrs. Belville, I am extremely unhappy to see you so distress'd.

Lady Rach. Now, I am extremely glad to see her so, for if she wasn't greatly distress'd it wou'd be monstrously unnatural.

Mrs. Bel. O, Matilda!—my husband! my husband! my children! my children!

Miss Wal. Don't weep, my dear! don't weep! pray be comforted, all may end happily. Lady Rachel, beg of her not to cry so.

Lady Rach. Why, you are crying yourself, Miss Walsingham; and tho' I think it out of character to encourage her tears, I can't help keeping you company.

Mrs. Bel. O, why is not some effectual method contriv'd, to prevent this horrible practice of duelling?

Lady Rach. I'll expose it on the stage, since the law now a-days, kindly leaves the whole cognizance of it to the theatre.

Miss Wal. And yet if the laws against it, were as well enforced as the laws against destroying the game, perhaps it would be equally for the benefit of the kingdom.

Mrs. Bel. No law will ever be effectual till the custom is render'd infamous.—
Wives must shriek!—mothers must agonize!

nize!——orphans must multiply! unless some blessed hand strips the fascinating glare from honourable murder, and bravely exposes the idol who is worship'd thus in blood. While it is disreputable to obey the laws, we cannot look for reformation:—But if the duellist is once banished from the presence of his sovereign;—if he is for life excluded the confidence of his country;—if a mark of indelible disgrace is stamp'd upon him, the sword of publick justice will be the sole chastiser of wrongs; trifles will not be punish'd with death, and offences really meriting such a punishment, will be reserv'd for the only proper avenger, the common executioner.

Lady Rach. I cou'dn't have express'd myself better on the subject, my dear; but till such a hand as you talk of is found, the best will fall into the error of the times.

Miss Wal. Yes, and butcher each other like madmen, for fear their courage should be suspected by fools.

Mrs. Bel. No news yet from Captain Savage?

Lady Rach. He can't have reach'd Hyde-park yet, my dear.

Miss Wal. Let us lead you to your chamber, my dear; you'll be better there.

Mrs. Bel. Matilda, I must be wretched any where; but I'll attend you.

Lady

Lady Rach. Thank heav'n, I have no husband to plunge me into such a situation!

Miss Wal. And, if I thought I cou'd keep my resolution, I'd determine this moment on living single all the days of my life. Pray don't spare my arm, my dear. [Exeunt.

S C E N E, *Hyde Park.*

Enter BELVILLE.

Bel. I fancy I am rather before the time of appointment; engagements of this kind are the only ones, in which, now-a-days, people pretend to any punctuality:—a man is allow'd half an hours law to dinner, but a thrust through the body must be given within a second of the clock.

Enter LEESON.

Leef. Your servant, Sir.—Your name I suppose is Belville?

Bel. Your supposition is very right, Sir; and I fancy I am not much in the wrong, when I suppose your name to be Leeson.

Leef. It is, Sir; I am sorry I shou'd keep you here a moment.

Bel. I am very sorry, Sir, you shou'd bring me here at all.

Leef. I regret the occasion, be assured, Sir; but 'tis not now a time for talking, we must proceed to action.

Bel.

Bel. And yet talking is all the action I shall proceed to, depend upon it.

Leef. What do you mean, Sir? Where are your pistols?

Bel. Where I intend they shall remain till my next journey into the country, very quietly over the chimney in my dressing room.

Leef. You treat this matter with too much levity, Mr. Belville; take your choice of mine, Sir.

Bel. I'd rather take them both, if you please, for then no mischief shall be done with either of them.

Leef. Sir, this trifling is adding insult to injury; and shall be resented accordingly. Didn't you come here to give me satisfaction?

Bel. Yes, every satisfaction in my power.

Leef. Take one of these pistols then.

Bel. Come, Mr. Leeson, your bravery will not at all be lessen'd by the exercise of a little understanding: If nothing less than my life can atone for the injury I have unconsciously done you, fire at me instantly, but don't be offended because I decline to do you an additional wrong.

Leef. S'death, Sir, do you think I come here with an intention to murder?

Bel. You come to arm the guilty against the innocent, Sir; and that, in my opinion,

nion, is the most atrocious intention of murder.

Leef. How's this?—

Bel. Look'e, Mr. Leeson, there's your pistol [*throws it on the ground*] I have already acted very wrongly with respect to your sister, but, Sir, I have some character, though perhaps little enough, to maintain, and I will not do a still worse action, in raising my hand against your life.

Leef. This hypocritical cant of cowardice, Sir, is too palpable to disarm my resentment; though I held you to be a man of profligate principles, I nevertheless consider'd you as a man of courage; but, if you hesitate a moment longer, by heaven, I'll chastise you on the spot. [*Draws.*]

Bel. I must defend my life; though if it did not look like timidity, I would inform you—[*they fight, Leeson is disarmed*]
—Mr. Leeson, there is your sword again.

Leef. Strike it through my bosom, Sir;—I don't desire to out-live this instant.

Bel. I hope, my dear Sir, that you will long live happy—as your sister, tho' to my shame I can claim no merit on that account, is recovered unpolluted, by her family; but let me beg that you will now see the folly of decisions by the sword, when success is not fortunately chain'd to the side of justice: Before I leave you,
receive

receive my sincerest apologies for the injuries I have done you; and, be assured, no occurrence will ever give me greater pleasure, than an opportunity of serving you, if, after what is past, you shall at any time condescend to use me as a friend. [Exit,

Leef. Very well—very well—very well.

Enter CONNOLLY.

Leef. What, you have been within hearing, I suppose?

Con. You may say that.

Leef. And isn't this very fine?

Con. Why I can't say much as to the finery of it, Sir, but it is certainly very foolish.

Leef. And so this is my satisfaction after all!

Con. Yes, and pretty satisfaction it is. When Mr. Belville did you but one injury, he was the greatest villain in the world; but now that he has done you two, in drawing his sword upon you, I suppose he is a very worthy gentleman.

Leef. To be foil'd, baffled, disappointed in my revenge!—What tho' my sister is by accident unstain'd, his intentions are as criminal, as if her ruin was actually perpetrated; there is no possibility of enduring the reflection!—I wish not for the blood of my enemy, but I would

at least have the credit of giving him life.

Con. Arrah, my dear, if you had any regard for the life of your enemy, you shou'dn't put him in the way of death.

Leef. No more of these reflections, my dear Connolly; my own feelings are painful enough. Will you be so good as to take these damn'd pistols, and come with me to the coach?

Con. Troth and that I will; but don't make yourself uneasy; consider that you have done every thing which honour required at your hands.

Leef. I hope so.

Con. Why you know so: You have broke the laws of heaven and earth, as nobly as the first lord in the land, and you have convinc'd the world, that where any body has done your family one injury, you have courage enough to do it another yourself, by hazarding your life.

Leef. Those, Connolly, who would live reputably in any country, must regulate their conduct in many cases by its very prejudices.—Custom, with respect to duelling, is a tyrant, whose despotism no body ventures to attack, tho' every body detests its cruelty.

Con. I didn't imagine that a tyrant of any kind would be tolerated in England.

But

But where do you think of going now? For chambers, you know, are at present most delightfully dangerous.

Leef. I shall go to Mrs. Crayon's.

Con. What the gentlewoman that paints all manner of colours in red chalk?

Leef. Yes, where I first became acquainted with Emily.

Con. And where the sweet creature has met you two or three times under pretence of sitting for her picture.

Leef. Mrs. Crayon will, I dare say, oblige me in this exigency with an apartment for a few days; but come, Connolly, we have no time to lose, tho' if you had any prudence, you would abandon me in my present situation.

Con. Ah, Sir, is this your opinion of my friendship? Do you think that any thing can ever give me half so much pleasure in serving you, as seeing you surrounded by misfortunes. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE changes to an Apartment at BELVILLE'S.

Enter General SAVAGE, TORRINGTON, and SPRUCE.

Spruce. Miss Walsingham will wait on you immediately, gentlemen.

Gen. Very well.

C c 2

Spruce.

Spruce. [*Aside*] What can old Holifernes want so continually with Miss Walsingham? [*Exit.*

Gen. When I bring this sweet mild creature home, I shall be able to break her spirit to my own wishes—I'll inure her to proper discipline from the first moment, and make her tremble at the very thought of mutiny.

Tor. Ah, General, you are wonderfully brave, when you know the meekness of your adversary.

Gen. Envy, Torrington—stark, staring envy: few fellows, on the borders of fifty, have so much reason as myself, to boast of a blooming young woman's partiality.

Tor. On the borders of fifty, man!—beyond the confines of threescore.

Gen. The more reason I have to boast of my victory then; but don't grumble at my triumph, you shall have a kiss of the bride, let that content you, Torrington.

Enter Miss WALSINGHAM.

Miss Wal. Gentlemen, your most obedient: General, I intended writing to you about a trifling mistake; but poor Mrs. Belville has been so very ill, that I couldn't find an opportunity.

Gen. I am very sorry for Mrs. Belville's illness, but I am happy, Madam, to be person-

personally in the way of receiving your commands, and I wait upon you with Mr. Torrington, to talk about a marriage settlement.

Miss Wal. Heavens! how shall I undeceive him? [*Aside.*

Tor. 'Tis rather an aukward business, Miss Walsingham, to trouble you upon; but as the General wishes that the affair may be as private as possible, he thought it better to speak to yourself, than to treat with any other person.

Gen. Yes, my lovely girl; and to convince you, that I intend to carry on an honourable war, not to pillage like a freebooter, Mr. Torrington will be a trustee.

Miss Wal. I am infinitely oblig'd to your intention, but there's no necessity to talk about any settlement—for—

Gen. Pardon me, Madam,—pardon me, there is—besides, I have determin'd that there shall be one, and what I once determine is absolute.—A tolerable hint for her own behaviour, when I have married her, Torrington. [*Aside to TOR.*

Miss Wal. I must not shock him before Mr. Torrington [*aside.*] General Savage, will you give me leave to speak a few words in private to you.

Gen. There is no occasion for founding a retreat, Madam; Mr. Torrington is acquainted with the whole business, and I

am determin'd, for your sake, that nothing shall be done without him.

Tor. I can have no objection to your hearing the lady ex parte, General.

Miss Wal. What I have to say, Sir, is of a very particular nature.

Tor. [*Rising*] I'll leave the room then.

Gen. [*Opposing him*] You shan't leave the room, Torrington. Miss Walsingham shall have a specimen of my command, even before marriage, and you shall see, that every woman is not to bully me out of my determination. [*Aside to TOR.*]

Miss Wal. Well, General, you must have your own way.

Gen. [*To TOR.*] Don't you see that it's only fighting the battle stoutly at first, with one of these gentle creatures?

Tor. [*Significantly*] Ah, General!

Gen. I own, Madam, your situation is a distressing one; let us sit down—let us sit down—

Miss Wal. It is unspeakably distressing indeed, Sir.

Tor. Distressing however as it may be, we must proceed to issue, Madam; the General proposes your jointure to be 1000*l.* a year.

Miss Wal. General Savage!

Gen. You think this too little, perhaps?

Miss Wal. I can't think of any jointure, Sir.

Tor.

Tor. Why to be sure, a jointure is at best but a melancholly possession, for it must be purchased by the loss of the husband you love.

Miss Wal. Pray don't name it, Mr. Torrington.

Gen. [*Kissing her hand*] A thousand thanks to you, my lovely girl.

Miss Wal. For heaven's sake, let go my hand.

Gen. I shall be mad 'till it gives me legal possession of the town.

Miss Wal. Gentlemen—General—Mr. Torrington—I beg you'll hear me.

Gen. By all means, my adorable creature; I can never have too many proofs of your disinterested affection.

Miss Wal. There is a capital mistake in this whole affair—I am sinking under a load of distress.

Gen. Your confusion makes you look charmingly though.

Miss Wal. There is no occasion to talk of jointures or marriages to me; I am not going to be married.

Tor. What's this?

Miss Wal. Nor have I an idea in nature, however enviable I think the honour, of being your wife, Sir.

Gen. Madam!

Tor. Why here's a demur!

Miss Wal. I am afraid, Sir, that in our conversation this morning, my confusion arising from the particularity of the subject, has led you into a material misconception.

Gen. I am thunderstruck, madam! I cou'dn't mistake my ground.

Tor. As clear a *nol: prof:* as ever was issued by an attorney general.

Gen. Surely you can't forget, that at the first word you hung out a flag of truce, told me even that I had a previous friend in the fort, and didn't so much as hint at a single article of capitulation?

Tor. Now for the rejoinder to this replication.

Miss Wal. All this is unquestionably true, General, and perhaps a good deal more; but in reality my confusion before you on this subject to day, was such, that I scarcely knew what I said; I was dying with distress, and at this moment am very little better;—permit me to retire, General Savage, and only suffer me to add, that tho' I think myself highly flatter'd by your addresses, it is impossible for me ever to receive them. Lord! Lord! I am glad it's over in any manner. [*Exit.*]

Tor. Why, we are a little out in this matter, General; the judge has decided against us, when we imagin'd ourselves sure of the cause.

Gen.

Gen. The gates shut in my teeth, just as I expected the keys from the governor.

Tor. I am disappointed myself, man; I shan't have a kiss of the bride.

Gen. At my time of life too!

Tor. I said from the first you were too old for her.

Gen. Zounds to fancy myself sure of her, and to triumph upon a certainty of victory.

Tor. Ay, and to kiss her hand in a rapturous return for her tendernefs to you:—let me advise you never to kiss before folks, as long as you live again.

Gen. Don't distract me, Torrington! a joke, where a friend has the misfortune to lose the battle, is a downright inhumanity.

Tor. You told me that your son had accus'd her of something that you would not hear; suppose we call at his lodgings, he perhaps, as an *amicus-curiæ*, may be able to give us a little information.

Gen. Thank you for the thought;—But keep your finger more than ever upon your lips, dear Torrington. You know how I dread the danger of ridicule, and it wou'd be too much, not only to be thrash'd out of the field, but to be laugh'd at into the bargain.

Tor. I thought when you made a presentment of your sweet person to Miss Walsing-

Walsingham, that the bill wou'd be return'd ignoramus. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E, BELVILLE'S.

Mrs. BELVILLE and Lady RACHEL MILDEW, discovered on a Sopha.

Lady Rach. You heard what Captain Savage said?

Mrs. Bel. I would flatter myself, but my heart will not suffer it; the Park might be too full for the horrid purpose, and perhaps they are gone to decide the quarrel in some other place.

Lady Rach. The Captain enquir'd of numbers in the Park without hearing a syllable of them, and is therefore positive that they are parted without doing any mischief.

Mrs. Bel. I am, nevertheless, torn by a thousand apprehensions, and my fancy, with a gloomy kind of fondness, fastens on the most deadly. This very morning, I exultingly numbered myself in the catalogue of the happiest wives.—Perhaps I am a wife no longer;—perhaps, my little innocents, your unhappy father is at this moment breathing his last sigh, and wishing, O, how vainly! that he had not prefer'd a guilty pleasure to his own life, to my eternal peace of mind, and your felicity!

Enter

Enter SPRUCE.

Spruce. Madam! madam! my master!
my master!

Mrs. Bel. Is he safe?

Enter BELVILLE.

Bel. My love!

Mrs. Bel. O Mr. Belville! [*Faints.*

Bel. Assistance, quick!

Lady Rach. There she revives.

Bel. The angel-softness! how this rends
my heart?

Mrs. Bel. O, Mr. Belville, if you cou'd
conceive the agonies I have endur'd, you
would avoid the possibility of another
quarrel as long as you liv'd, out of com-
mon humanity.

Bel. My dearest creature, spare these
tender reproaches; you know not how
sufficiently I am punish'd to see you thus
miserable.

Lady Rach. That's pleasant indeed,
when you have yourself deliberately load-
ed her with affliction.

Bel. Pray, pray Lady Rachel, have a
little mercy: Your poor humble servant
has been a very naughty boy,—but if you
only forgive him this single time, he will
never more deserve the rod of correction.

Mrs. Bel. Since you are return'd safe, I
am happy. Excuse these foolish tears,
they gush in spite of me.

Bel.

Bel. How contemptible do they render me, my love!

Lady Rach. Come, my dear, you must turn your mind from this gloomy subject.—Suppose we step up stairs and communicate our pleasure to Miss Walsingham?

Mrs. Bel. With all my heart. Adieu, recreant! [*Exeunt Mrs. BEL. and Lady RACH.*]

Bel. I don't deserve such a woman, I don't deserve her.—Yet, I believe I am the first husband, that ever found fault with a wife, for having too much goodness.

Enter SPRUCE.

What's the matter?

Spruce. Your sister——

Bel. What of my sister?

Spruce. Sir, is elop'd.

Bel. My sister!

Spruce. There is a letter left, Sir, in which she says, that her motive was a dislike to a match with Captain Savage, as she has plac'd her affections unalterably on another gentleman.

Bel. Death and damnation!

Spruce. Mrs. Moreland, your mother, is in the greatest 'distress; Sir, and begs you will immediately go with the servant that brought the message; for he observing the young lady's maid carrying some bundles out, a little suspiciously, thought

thought there must be some scheme going on, and dogg'd a hackney coach, in which Miss Morland went off, to the very house where it set her down.

Bel. Bring me to the servant, instantly; —but don't let a syllable of this matter reach my wife's ears, her spirits are already too much agitated. *[Exit.*

Spruce. Zounds! we shall be paid home, for the tricks we have play'd in other families. *[Exit.*

SCENE changes to Captain SAVAGE'S Lodgings.

Enter Captain SAVAGE.

Capt. The vehemence of my resentment against this abandon'd woman has certainly led me too far. I shou'dn't have acquainted her with my discovery of her baseness;—no, if I had acted properly, I should have conceal'd all knowledge of the transaction 'till the very moment of her guilt, and then burst upon her when she was solacing with her paramour, in all the fulness of security. Now, if she should either alter her mind, with respect to going to the masquerade, or go in a different habit to elude my observation, I not only lose the opportunity of exposing her, but give her time to plan some

some plausible excuse for her infamous letter to Belville.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. General Savage, and Mr. Torrington, Sir.

Capt. You blockhead, why did you let them wait a moment? What can be the meaning of this visit? [*Ex. SERVANT.*]

Enter General SAVAGE, and TORRINGTON.

Gen. I come, Horace, to talk to you about Miss Walsingham.

Capt. She's the most worthless woman existing, Sir: I can convince you of it.

Gen. I have already chang'd my own opinion of her.

Capt. What you have found her out yourself, Sir?

Tor. Yes, he has made a trifling discovery.

Gen. S'death, don't make me contemptible to my son. [*Aside to TOR.*]

Capt. But, Sir, what instance of her precious behaviour has come to your knowledge? For an hour has scarcely elapsed, since you thought her a miracle of goodness.

Tor. Ay, he has thought her a miracle of goodness, within this quarter of an hour.

Gen.

Gen. Why she has a manner that wou'd impose upon all the world.

Capt. Yes, but she has a manner also to undeceive the world thoroughly.

Tor. That we have found pretty recently; however, in this land of liberty, none are to be pronounced guilty, 'till they are positively convicted; I can't therefore find against Miss Walsingham, upon the bare strength of presumptive evidence.

Capt. Presumptive evidence! hav'n't I promis'd you ocular demonstration?

Tor. Ay, but 'till we receive this demonstration, my good friend, we cannot give judgement.

Capt. Then I'll tell you at once, who is the object of her honourable affections.

Gen. Who—who—

Capt. What would you think if they were plac'd on Belville?

Gen. Upon Belville! has she deserted to him from the corps of virtue?

Capt. Yes, she wrote to him, desiring to be taken from the masquerade to some convenient scene of privacy, and tho' I have seen the letter, she has the impudence to deny her own hand.

Gen. What a fiend is there then disguis'd under the uniform of an angel!

Tor. The delicate creature that was dying with confusion!

Capt.

Capt. Only come with me to the masquerade, and you shall see Belville carry her off: 'Twas about the scandalous appointment with him, I was speaking, when you conceiv'd I treated her so rudely.

Gen. And you were only anxious to shew her in her real character to me, when I was so exceedingly offended with you.

Capt. Nothing else in the world, Sir; I knew you would despise and detest her, the moment you were acquainted with her baseness.

Gen. How she brazen'd it out before my face, and what a regard she affected for your interest! I was a madman not to listen then to your explanation.

Tor. Tho' you both talk this point well, I still see nothing but strong presumption against Miss Walsingham: Mistakes have already happened, mistakes may happen again; and I will not give up a lady's honour, upon an evidence that wou'd not cast a common pickpocket at the Old Baily.

Capt. Come to the masquerade then and be convinc'd.

Gen. Let us detach a party for dresses immediately. Yet remember, Torrington, that the punctuality of evidence which is necessary in a court of law, is by no means requisite in a court of honour.

Tor.

Tor. Perhaps it would be more to the honour of your honourable courts if it was. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE *changes to an Apartment at Mrs. CRAYON'S.*

Bel. [Behind.] My dear, you must excuse me.

Maid. Indeed, Sir, you must not go up stairs.

Bel. Indeed but I will; the man is positive to the house, and I'll search every room in it, from the cellar to the garret, if I don't find the lady. James, don't stir from the street door.

Enter BELVILLE followed by a MAID.

Maid. Sir, you are the strangest gentleman I ever met with in all my born days:—I wish my mistress was at home.

Bel. I am a strange fellow, my dear—But if your mistress was at home, I shou'd take the liberty of peeping into the apartments.

Maid. Sir, there's company in that room, you can't go in there.

Bel. Now that's the very reason I will go in.

Maid. This must be some great man, or he wou'dn't behave so obstropolous.

Bel. Good manners by your leave a little. *[Forcing the door.]* Whoever my

gentleman is, I'll call him to a severe reckoning:—I have been just call'd to one myself, for making free with another man's sister.

Enter L E E S O N *followed by* C O N -
N O L L Y.

Leef. Who is it that dares commit an outrage upon this apartment?

Con. An Englishman's very lodging; ay, and an Irishman's too, I hope, is his castle;—an Irishman is an Englishman all the world over.

Bel. Mr. Leeson!

Maid. O we shall have murder.

[*Running off.*

Con. Run into that room, my dear, and stay with the young lady.

[*Exit* M A I D.

Leef. And Connolly let nobody else into that room.

Con. Let me alone for that, honey, if this gentleman has fifty people.

Leef. Whence is it, Mr. Belville, that you persecute me thus with injuries?

Bel. I am fill'd with astonishment!

Con. Faith, to speak the truth, you do look a little surpriz'd.

Leef. Answer me, Sir; what is the foundation of this new violence?

Bel. I am come, Mr. Leeson, upon an affair, Sir—

Con.

Con. The devil burn me if he was half so much confounded a while ago, when there was a naked sword at his breast.

Bel. I am come, Mr. Leeson, upon an affair, Sir, that—How the devil shall I open it to him, since the tables are so fairly turn'd upon me.

Leesf. Dispatch, Sir, for I have company in the next room.

Bel. A lady, I suppose?

Leesf. Suppose it is, Sir?

Bel. And the lady's name is Moreland, isn't it, Sir?

Leesf. I can't see what business you have with her name, Sir, You took away my sister, and I hope you have no designs upon the lady in the next room.

Bel. Indeed but I have.

Leesf. The devil you have!

Con. Well, this is the most unaccountable man I ever heard of, he'll have all the women in the town, I believe.

Leesf. And pray, Sir, what pretensions, have you to the lady in the next room, even supposing her to be Miss Moreland?

Bel. No other pretensions than what a brother should have to the defence of his sister's honour: You thought yourself authorised to cut my throat a-while ago in a similar business.

Leesf. And is Miss Moreland your sister?

Bel. Sir, there is insolence in that question; you know she is.

Leef. By heaven, I did not know it till this moment; but I rejoice at the discovery: This is blow for blow!

Con. Devil burn me but they have fairly made a swop of it.

Bel. And you really didn't know that Miss Moreland was my sister?

Leef. I don't conceive myself under much necessity of apologizing to you, Sir; but I am incapable of a dishonourable design upon any woman; and tho' Miss Moreland in our short acquaintance, repeatedly mentioned her brother, she never once told me that his name was Belville.

Con. And he has had such few opportunities of being in her company, unless by letters, honey, that he knew nothing more of her connections, than her being a sweet pretty creter, and having 30,000 l.

Bel. The fortune, I dare say, no way lessened the force of her attractions.

Leef. I am above dissimulation——It really did not.

Bel. Well, Mr. Leeson, our families have shewn such a very strong inclination to come together, that it would really be a pity to disappoint them.

Con. Upon my soul and so it would; though the dread of being forc'd to have a husband, the young lady tells us,
quicken'd

quicken'd her resolution to marry this gentleman.

Bel. O she had no violence of that kind to apprehend from her family; therefore, Mr. Leeson, since you seem as necessary for the girl's happiness, as she seems for your's, you shall marry her here in town, with the consent of all her friends, and save yourself the trouble of an expedition to Scotland.

Lees. Can I believe you serious?

Bel. Zounds, Leeson, that air of surprise is a sad reproach! I didn't surprise you when I did a bad action, but I raise your astonishment, when I do a good one.

Con. And by my soul, Mr. Belville, if you knew how a good action becomes a man, you'd never do a bad one as long as you liv'd.

Lees. You have given me life and happiness in one day, Mr. Belville! however, it is now time you should see your sister; I know you'll be gentle with her, tho' you have so much reason to condemn her choice, and generously remember that her elopement proceeded from the great improbability there was of a beggar's ever meeting with the approbation of her family.

Bel. Don't apologize for your circumstances, Leeson; a princess could do no more than make you happy, and if you

make her so, you meet her upon terms of the most perfect equality.

Leef. This is a new way of thinking, Mr. Belville.

Bel. 'Tis only an honest way of thinking, and I consider my sister a gainer upon the occasion; for a man of your merit is more difficult to be found, than a woman of her fortune.

[*Exeunt* LEESON and BELVILLE.

Con. What's the reason now that I can't skip, and laugh, and rejoice, at this affair? Upon my soul my heart's as full as if I had met with some great misfortune. Well, pleasure in the extreme is certainly a very painful thing: I am really ashamed of these womans drops, and yet I don't know but that I ought to blush for being ashamed of them, for I am sure nobody's eye ever looks half so well, as when it is disfigured by a tear of humanity. [*Exit.*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT

A C T V.

S C E N E *a Drawing-Room.**Enter BELVILLE.*

Bel. WELL, happiness is once more mine, and the women are all going in tip-top spirits to the masquerade. Now, Mr. Belville, let me have a few words with you; Miss Walsingham, the ripe, the luxurious Miss Walsingham, expects to find you there burning with impatience:—But, my dear friend, after the occurrences of the day, can you be weak enough to plunge into fresh crimes? Can you be base enough to abuse the goodness of that angel your wife; and wicked enough, not only to destroy the innocence which is shelter'd beneath your own roof, but to expose your family perhaps again, to the danger of losing a son, a brother, a father, and a husband? The possession of the three Graces is surely too poor a recompence for the folly you must commit, for the shame you must feel, and the consequences you must hazard. Upon my soul if I struggle a little longer, I shall rise in my own opinion, and be less a rascal than I think myself:—Ay, but the object is bewitching;—the matter will be

an eternal secret—and if it is known that I sneak in this pitiful manner from a fine woman, when the whole elysium of her person solicits me:—well, and am I afraid the world should know that I have shrunk from an infamous action?—A thousand blessings on you dear conscience for that one argument;—I shall be an honest man after all—Suppose, however, that I give her the meeting; that's dangerous;—that's dangerous:—and I am so little accustomed to do what is right, that I shall certainly do what is wrong, the moment I am in the way of temptation. Come, Belville, your resolution is not so very slender a dependance, and you owe Miss Walsingham reparation for the injury which you have done her principles. I'll give her the meeting—I'll take her to the house I intended—I'll——Zounds! what a fool I have been all this time, to look for precarious satisfaction in vice, when there is such exquisite pleasure to be found at a certainty in virtue! [Exit.

Enter Lady RACHEL and Mrs. BELVILLE.

Lady Rach. For mirth sake don't let him see us: There has been a warm debate between his passion and his conscience.

Mrs. Bel. And the latter is the conqueror, my life for it.

Lady

Lady Rach. Dear Mrs. Belville you are the best of women, and ought to have the best of husbands.

Mrs. Bel. I have the best of husbands.

Lady Rach. I have not time to dispute the matter with you now; but I shall put you into my comedy to teach wives, that the best receipt for matrimonial happiness, is to be deaf, dumb, and blind.

Mrs. Bel. Poh! poh! you are a satirist, Lady Rachel——But we are losing time; shou'dn't we put on our dresses, and prepare for the grand scene?

Lady Rach. Don't you tremble at the trial?

Mrs. Bel. Not in the least, I am sure my heart has no occasion.

Lady Rach. Have you let Miss Walsingham into our little plot?

Mrs. Bel. You know she cou'd not be insensible of Mr. Belville's design upon herself, and it is no farther than that design, we have any thing to carry into execution.

Lady Rach. Well, she may serve to facilitate the matter, and therefore I am not sorry that you have trusted her.

Mrs. Bel. We shall be too late, and then what signifies all your fine plotting.

Lady Rach. Is it not a little pang of jealousy that wou'd fain now quicken our motions?

Mrs.

Mrs. Bel. No, Lady Rachel, it is a certainty of my husband's love and generosity, that makes me wish to come to the trial. I wou'd not exchange my confidence in his affections for all the mines of Peru; so nothing you can say will make me miserable.

Lady Rach. You are a most unaccountable woman; so away with you. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E *continued.*

Enter SPRUCE and GHASTLY.

Spruce. Why, Ghastly, the old general your master is a greater fool than I ever thought he was: He wants to marry Miss Walsingham?

Ghast. Mrs. Tempest suspected that there was something going forward, by all his hugger-mugger consulting with Mr. Torrington; and so set me on to listen.

Spruce. She's a good friend of your's, and that thing she made the General give you the other day in the hospital, is I suppose a snug hundred a year.

Ghast. Better than two; I wash for near four thousand people: there was a major of horse who put in for it, and pleaded a large family—

Spruce. With long services, I suppose.

Ghast. Yes, but Mrs. Tempest insisted upon my long services; so the major was
set

set aside——However to keep the thing from the damn'd News-papers, I fancy he will succeed the barber, who died last night, poor woman, of a lying-in fever, after being brought to bed of three children.—Places in public institutions.—

Spruce. Are often sweetly dispos'd, I think of asking Belville for something, one of these days.

Ghast. He has great interest.

Spruce. I might be a justice of peace, if I pleased, and in a shabby neighbourhood, were the mere swearing would bring in something tolerable; but there are so many strange people let into the commission now-a-days, that I shou'dn't like to have my name in the list.

Ghast. You are right.

Spruce. No, no, I leave that to paltry tradesmen, and shall think of some little sinecure, or a small pension on the Irish establishment.

Ghast. Well, success attend you. I must hobble home as fast as I can, to know if Mrs. Tempest has any orders. O, there's a rare storm brewing for our old goat of a General.

Spruce. When shall we crack a bottle together?

Ghast. O, I shan't touch a glass of Claret these three weeks; for last night I gave nature a little fillip with a drunken bout,

bout, according to the doctor's directions; I have entirely left off bread, and I am in great hopes that I shall get rid of my gout by these means, specially if I can learn to eat my meat quite raw like a cannibal.

Spruce. Ha, ha, ha!

Ghaſt. Look at me, *Spruce*, I was once as likely a young fellow as any underground in the whole parish of St. James's:—but waiting on the General so many years—

Spruce. Ay, and following his example, *Ghaſtly*—

Ghaſt. 'Tis too true: has reduc'd me to what you ſee. Theſe miſerable ſpindles wou'd do very well for a lord or a duke, *Spruce*; but they are a ſad diſgrace to a poor valet de chambre. [*Exit.*

Spruce. Well, I don't believe there's a gentleman's gentleman within the weekly bills, who joins a prudent ſolicitude for the main-chance, to a ſtrict care of his conſtitution, better than myſelf. I have a little girl who ſtands me in about three guineas a week; I never bet more than a pound upon a rubber of whiſt; I always ſleep with my head very warm; and ſwallow a new laid egg every morning with my chocolate. [*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE *changes to the Street, two Chairs cross the Stage, knock at a Door, and set down BELVILLE and a Lady.*

Bel. This way, my dear creature!

[Exeunt.

Enter General SAVAGE, Captain SAVAGE, and TORRINGTON.

Capt. There! there they go in:—You see the place is quite convenient, not twenty yards from the masquerade.

Gen. How closely the fellow sticks to her.

Tor. Like the great seal to the peerage patent of a chancellor. But, gentlemen, we have still no more than proof presumptive:—where is the ocular demonstration which we were to have?

Capt. I'll swear to the blue domino; 'tis a very remarkable one, and so is Belville's.

Tor. You wou'd have rare custom among the Newgate sollicitors, if you'd venture an oath upon the identity of the party under it.

Gen. 'Tis the very size and shape of Miss Walsingham.

Tor. And yet I have a strange notion that there is a trifling *alibi* in this case.

Gen. It wou'd be a damn'd affair if we shou'd be countermin'd.

Capt.

Capt. O, follow me, here's the door left luckily open, and I'll soon clear up the matter beyond a question.

[Enters the house.]

Tor. Why your son is mad, General. This must produce a deadly breach with Belville. For heav'n's sake, let's go in and prevent any excesses of his rashness.

Gen. By all means, or the poor fellow's generous anxiety on my account may be productive of very fatal consequences.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE *changes to an apartment, BELVILLE unmasked, and a lady in a blue domino mask'd.*

Bel. My dear Miss Walsingham, we are now perfectly safe, yet I will by no means intreat you to unmask, because I am convinc'd, from the propriety with which you repuls'd my addresses this morning, that you intend the present interview should make me still more deeply sensible of my presumption.—I never lied so awkwardly in all my life; if it was to make her comply, I should be at no loss for language. *[Aside]* The situation in which I must appear before you, Madam, is certainly a very humiliating one; but I am persuaded that your generosity will be gratified to hear, that I have bid an everlasting adieu to my profligacy, and am
now

now only alive to the virtues of Mrs. Belville.—She won't speak—I don't wonder at it, for brazen as I am myself, if I met so mortifying a rejection, I should be cursedly out of countenance. [*Aside.*]

Capt. [*Behind.*] I will go in.

Gen. [*Behind.*] I command you to desist.

Tor. [*Behind.*] This will be an affair for the Old-Bailey.

[*The noise grows more violent, and continues.*]

Bel. Why, what the devil is all this?—Don't be alarm'd, Miss Walsingham, be assur'd I'll protect you at the hazard of my life;—step into this closet,—you shan't be discover'd depend upon it; [*she goes in*]: And now to find out the cause of this confusion. [*Unlocks the door.*]

Enter General SAVAGE, Captain SAVAGE, and TORRINGTON.

Bel. Savage! what is the meaning of this strange behaviour?

Capt. Where is Miss Walsingham?

Bel. So then, Sir, this is a premeditated scheme, for which I am oblig'd to your friendship.

Capt. Where's Miss Walsingham, Sir?

Gen. Dear Belville, he is out of his senses; this storm was entirely against my orders.

Tor.

Tor. If he proceeds much longer in these vagaries, we must amuse him with a commission of lunacy.

Bel. This is neither a time nor a place for argument, Mr. Torrington; but as you and the General seem to be in the possession of your senses, I shall be glad if you'll take this very friendly gentleman away; and depend upon it, I shan't die in his debt for the present obligation.

Capt. And depend upon it, Sir, 'pay the obligation when you will, I shan't stir 'till I see Miss Walsingham.—Look'ee, Belville, there are secret reasons for my behaving in this manner; reasons, which you yourself will approve, when you know them;—my father here—

Gen. Disavows your conduct in every particular, and would rejoice to see you at the halberds.

Tor. And, for my part, I told him previously 'twas a downright burglary.

Bel. Well, gentlemen, let your different motives for breaking in upon me in this agreeable manner, be what they may, I don't see that I am less annoy'd by my friends than my enemy. I must therefore again, request that you will all walk down stairs.

Capt. I'll first walk into this room.

Bel. Really, I think you will not.

Gen.

Gen. What phrenzy possesses the fellow to urge this matter farther?

Capt. While there's a single doubt she triumphs over justice; [*drawing.*] I will go into that room.

Bel. Then you must make your way thro' me.

Enter Mrs. BELVILLE.

Mrs. Bel. Ah!

Capt. There, I knew she was in the room:—there's the blue domino.

Gen. Put up your sword, if you don't desire to be cashier'd from my favour for ever.

Bel. Why, wou'd you come out, madam? But, you have nothing to apprehend.

Capt. Pray, madam, will you have the goodness to unmask?

Bel. She shan't unmask.

Capt. I say she shall.

Bel. I say she shall not.

Mrs. Bel. Pray, let me oblige the gentleman?

Capt. Death and destruction, here's a discovery!

Gen. and Tor. Mrs. Belville!

Mrs. Bel. Yes, Mrs. Belville, gentlemen: Is conjugal fidelity so very terrible a thing now a-days, that a man is to suffer death for being found in company with his own wife?

Bel. My love, this is a surprize, indeed — But it is a most agreeable one; since you find me really asham'd of my former follies, and cannot now doubt the sincerity of my reformation.

Mrs. Bel. I am too happy! this single moment wou'd overpay a whole life of anxiety.

Bel. Where shall I attend you? Will you return to the masquerade?

Mrs. Bel. O no! Lady Rachel and Miss Walsingham are by this time at our house, with Mr. Leeson and the Irish gentleman whom you press'd into our party, impatiently expecting the result of this adventure.

Bel. Give me leave to conduct you home then from this scene of confusion. To-morrow, Captain Savage, I shall beg the favour of your explanation; [*aside to him as he goes out.*] Kind gentlemen, your most humble servant.

Mrs. Bel. And when you next disturb a *tête à tête*, for pity to a poor wife, don't let it be so very uncustomary a party, as the matrimonial one.

[*Exeunt BEL. and Mrs. BEL.*

Gen. [*To the CAPT.*] So, Sir, you have led us upon a blessed expedition here.

Tor. Now, don't you think that if your courts of honour, like our courts of law, search'd a little minutely into evidence, it wou'd

wou'd be equally to the credit of their understandings?

Capt. Tho' I am cover'd with confusion at my mistake, for you see, Belville was mistaken as well as myself, I am overjoy'd at this discovery of Miss Walsingham's innocence.

Gen. I shou'd exult in it too, with a *feu de joy*, if it didn't now shew the impossibility of her ever being Mrs. Savage.

Capt. Dear Sir, why should you think that an impossibility? Tho' some mistakes have occur'd in consequence I suppose, of Mrs. Belville's little plot upon her husband, I dare say Miss Walsingham may yet be prevail'd upon to come into our family.

Tor. Take care of a new error in your proceedings, young gentleman.

Gen. Ay, another defeat would make us compleatly despicable.

Capt. Sir, I'll forfeit my life, if she does not consent to the marriage this very night.

Gen. Only bring this matter to bear, and I'll forgive you every thing.

Tor. The Captain shou'd be inform'd, I think General, that she declin'd it peremptorily this evening.

Gen. Ay, do you hear that, Horace?

Capt. I am not at all surpriz'd at it, considering the general misconception we labour'd under. But I'll immediately to

Belville's, explain the whole mystery, and conclude every thing to your satisfaction.

[Exit.

Gen. So, Torrington, we shall be able to take the field again, you see.

Tor. But how in the name of wonder has your son found out your intention of marrying Miss Walsingham? I look'd upon myself as the only person acquainted with the secret.

Gen. That thought has march'd itself two or three times to my own recollection. For tho' I gave him some distant hints of the affair, I took particular care to keep behind the works of a proper circumspection.

Tor. O, if you gave him any hints at all, I am not surpriz'd at his discovering every thing.

Gen. I shall be all impatience 'till I hear of his interview with Miss Walsingham: Suppose my dear friend we went to Belville's, 'tis but in the next street, and we shall be there in the lighting of a match.

Tor. Really this is a pretty business for a man of my age and profession, trot here, trot there. But, as I have been weak enough to make myself a kind of party in the cause, I own that I have curiosity enough to be anxious about the determination.

Gen. Come along my old boy; and remember the song, "*Servile spirits, &c.*"

[Exeunt.

S C E N E

SCENE *changes to* BELVILLE'S.

Enter Captain SAVAGE and Miss
WALSINGHAM.

Capt. Nay, but my dearest Miss Walsingham, the extenuation of my own conduct to Belville made it absolutely necessary for me to discover my engagements with you; and as happiness is now so fortunately in our reach, I flatter myself you will be prevail'd upon to forgive an error, which proceeded only from an extravagance of love.

Miss Wal. To think me capable of such an action, Captain Savage! I am terrified at the idea of a union with you, and it is better for a woman at any time, to sacrifice an insolent lover, than to accept of a suspicious husband.

Capt. In the happiest unions, my dearest creature, there must be always something to overlook on both sides.

Miss Wal. Very civil, truly.

Capt. Pardon me, my life, for this frankness; and recollect, that if the lover has thro' misconception been unhappily guilty, he brings a husband altogether reform'd to your hands.

Miss Wal. Well, I see I must forgive you at last, so I may as well make a merit of necessity, you provoking creature.

Capt. And may I hope, indeed, for the blessing of this hand?

Miss Wal. Why, you wretch, would you have me force it upon you? I think, after what I have said, a soldier might have ventur'd to take it without farther ceremony.

Capt. Angelic creature! thus I seize it as my lawful prize.

Miss Wal. Well, but now you have obtained this inestimable prize, Captain, give me again leave to ask if you have had a certain explanation with the General?

Capt. How can you doubt it?

Miss Wal. And he is really impatient for our marriage?

Capt. 'Tis incredible how earnest he is.

Miss Wal. What, did he tell you of his Interview with me this evening, when he brought Mr. Torrington?

Capt. He did.

Miss Wal. O, then, I can have no doubt.

Capt. If a shadow of doubt remains, here he comes to remove it. Joy, my dear Sir! joy a thousand times!

Enter General SAVAGE, and TORRINGTON.

Gen. What, my dear boy, have you carried the day?

Miss

Miss Wal. I have been weak enough to indulge him with a victory, indeed, General.

Gen. None but the brave, none but the brave, &c. [Singing.

Tor. I congratulate you heartily on this decree, General.

Gen. This had nearly proved a day of disappointment, but the stars have fortunately turn'd it in my favour, and now I reap the rich reward of my victory. [Salutes her.]

Capt. And here I take her from you, as the greatest good which heav'n can send me.

Miss Wal. O, Captain!

Gen. You take her as the greatest good which heav'n can send you, firrah; I take her as the greatest good which heav'n can send me: And now what have you to say to her?

Miss Wal. General Savage!

Tor. Here will be a fresh injunction to stop proceedings.

Miss Wal. Are we never to have done with mistakes?

Gen. What mistakes can have happen'd now my sweetest? you deliver'd up your dear hand to me this moment?

Miss Wal. True, Sir; but I thought you were going to bestow my dear hand upon this dear gentleman.

Gen. How! that dear gentleman!

Capt. I am thunder-struck!

Tor. General—*None but the brave, &c.*
[*Sings.*

Gen. So the covert way is clear'd at last; and you have imagin'd that I was all along negotiating for this fellow, when I was gravely soliciting for myself?

Miss Wal. No other idea, Sir, ever once enter'd my imagination.

Tor. General.—*Noble minds should ne'er despair, &c.* [*Sings.*

Gen. Zounds! here's all the company pouring upon us in full gallop, and I shall be the laughing stock of the whole town.

Enter BELVILLE, *Mrs.* BELVILLE,
Lady RACHEL, LEESON *and*
CONNOLLY.

Bel. Well, General, we have left you a long time together. Shall I give you joy?

Gen. No; with me demolish'd in the fortifications of Dunkirk.

Mrs. Bel. What's the matter?

Lady Rach. The General appears disconcerted.

Lees. The gentleman looks as if he had fought a hard battle.

Con. Ay, and gain'd nothing but a defeat, my dear.

Tor. I'll shew cause for his behaviour.

Gen.

Gen. Death and damnation! not for the world. I am taken by surprise here; let me consider a moment how to cut my way thro' the enemy.

Miss Wal. How cou'd you be deceiv'd in this manner. [To CAPT.

Lady Rach. O, Mr. Torrington, we are much oblig'd to you; you have been in town ever since last night, and only see us now by accident.

Tor. I have been very busy, Madam; but you look sadly, very sadly indeed! your old disorder the jaundice, I suppose, has been very troublesome to you?

Lady Rach. Sir, you have a very extraordinary mode of complimenting your acquaintance.

Con. I don't believe for all that, that there's a word of a lie in the truth he speaks. [Aside.

Mrs. Bel. Miss Walsingham, Captain Savage has been telling Mr. Belville and me of a very extraordinary mistake.

Miss Wal. 'Tis very strange indeed, mistake on mistake.

Bel. 'Tis no way strange to find every body properly struck with the merit of Miss Walsingham.

Miss Wal. A compliment from you now, Mr. Belville, is really worth accepting.

Gen. If I thought the affair cou'd be kept a secret, by making the town over
to

to my son, since I am utterly shut out myself—

Capt. He seems exceedingly embarrassed.

Gen. If I thought that;—why mortified as I must be in giving it up, I think I cou'd resolve upon the manœuvre, to save myself from universal ridicule: but it can't be;—it can't be; and I only double my own disappointment in rewarding the disobedience of the rascal who has supplanted me. There!—there! they are all talking of it, all laughing at me, and I shall run mad!

Mrs. Temp. [*Behind*] I say, you feather-headed puppy, he is in this house; my own servant saw him come in, and I will not stir 'till I find him.

Gen. She here!—then deliberation is over, and I am entirely blown up.

Lady Rach. I'll take notes of this affair.

Enter Mrs. TEMPEST.

Mrs. Temp. Mighty well, Sir. So you are in love it seems;—and you want to be married it seems?

Leef. My blessed aunt!—O how proud I am of the relation.

Gen. Dear Bab, give me quarter before all this company.

Mrs. Temp. You are in love, you old fool, are you? and you want to marry Miss Walsingham, indeed!

Con.

Con. I never heard a pleasanter spoken gentlewoman—O hony, if I had the taming of her, she shou'd never be abusive, without keeping a civil tongue in her head.

Mrs. Temp. Well, Sir, and when is the happy day to be fix'd?

Bel. What the devil, is this true General?

Gen. True.—Can you believe such an absurdity?

Mrs. Temp. Why, will you deny, you miserable old mummy, that you made proposal of marriage to her?—

Gen. Yes I do—no I don't—proposals of marriage!

Miss Wal. In favour of your son.—I'll help him out a little. [*Aside.*]

Gen. Yes, in favour of my son—what the devil shall I do?

Mrs. Bel. Shall I take a lesson from this lady, Mr. Belville? Perhaps if the women of virtue were to pluck up a little spirit, they might be soon as well treated as kept mistresses.

Mrs. Temp. Harkee, General Savage, I believe you assert a falsehood; but if you speak the truth, give your son this moment to Miss Walsingham, and let me be fairly rid of my rival.

Gen. My son! Miss Walsingham!—Miss Walsingham, my son!

Bel. It will do, Horace; it will do.

Mrs.

Mrs. Temp. No prevarications, General Savage; do what I bid you instantly, or by all the wrongs of an enraged woman, I'll so expose you.—

Con. What a fine fellow this is, to have the command of an army!

Gen. If Miss Walsingham can be prevailed upon.

Tor. O, she'll oblige you readily—But you must settle a good fortune upon your son.

Mrs. Temp. That he shall do.

Mrs. Bel. Miss Walsingham, my Dear—

Miss Wal. I can refuse nothing either to your request, or to the request of the General.

Gen. Oblige me with your hand then, Madam: come here you—come here Captain. There, there is Miss Walsingham's hand for you.

Con. And as pretty a little fist it is, as any in the three kingdoms.

Gen. Torrington shall settle the fortune.

Leef. I give you joy most heartily, Madam.

Bel. We all give her joy.

Capt. Mine is beyond the power of expression.

Miss Wal. [*Aside to the company*] And so is the General's, I believe.

Con. O faith, that may be easily seen by the sweetness of his countenance.

Tor.

Tor. Well, the cause being now at last determin'd, I think we may all retire from the court.

Gen. And without any great credit, I fear, to the General.

Con. By my soul, you may say that.—

Mrs. Temp. Do you murmur, Sir?— Come this moment home with me.

Gen. I'll go any where to hide this miserable head of mine: what a damn'd campaign have I made of it!

[*Exeunt GEN. and Mrs. TEMP.*]

Con. Upon my soul, if I was in the General's place, I'd divide the house with this devil; I'd keep within doors myself, and make her take the outside.

Bel. The day has been a busy one, thanks to the communicative disposition of the Captain.

Mrs. Bel. And the evening should be chearful.

Bel. I shan't therefore part with one of you, 'till we have had a hearty laugh at our general adventures.

Miss Wal. They have been very whimsical indeed; yet if represented on the stage, I hope they wou'd be found not only entertaining, but instructive.

Lady Rach. Instructive! why the modern Critics say that the only business of Comedy is to make people laugh.

Bel.

Bel. That is degrading the dignity of letters exceedingly, as well as lessening the utility of the stage—A good comedy is a capital effort of genius, and should therefore be directed to the noblest purposes.

Miss Wal. Very true; and unless we learn something while we chuckle, the carpenter who nails a Pantomime together, will be entitled to more applause, than the best comic poet in the kingdom.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

F I N I S.

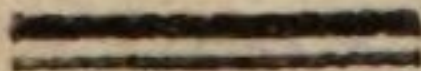
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